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# Manchester Quarterly

AN ILLUSTRATED JOURNAL

OF

LITERATURE AND ART.



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A VOLENDAM FISHERMAN.









## ON THE ZUIDER ZEE.

By ERNEST MARRIOTT.

ON the shores of the large gulf which, since its origin by inundation seven hundred years ago has been known as the Zuider Zee, the march of fashion is unheeded, and in the red roofed villages which cluster round the marge of this inland sea the transfiguring hand of modernity has been stayed. That a race of people should be wearing the same style of dress as that of their ancestors of three centuries ago is sufficiently remarkable. But that such a delightful state of things should exist so near to a civilisation of progressive vulgarity is still more so. In Holland the ancient and the modern rub shoulders, jostle against each other and drift apart again. The streams meet and flow along together yet do not mix.

This is one of the great characteristics that fascinate the observer. For instance, you may go to Scheveningen on the sea coast, a place of glittering sands and gigantic hotels and you will find the same characteristic there. Scheveningen is a Dutch Brighton with an immense stretch of promenade backed by fashionable café restaurants where the visitor pays four or five shillings for the privilege of eating an omelette. Yet a little way beyond the south end of the promenade, there is a tiny wooden-hutted fishing village that smells to heaven. In the clear summer

evenings after the fishers have returned to harbour the inhabitants, clad in their quaint baggy costumes and barbaric ornaments, sally forth out of the fishy reek and the tarry odour and walk along the electrically lit promenade into the fashionable throng. All seem to partake of the light and the glamour with equal zest. Yet the two classes are as far apart in their appearance and mode of life as it is possible for them to be.

It is extraordinary, considering the small area of Holland, how many varieties of costume are in vogue among the peasantry. Each colony has an individuality. Katwyk with its fishermen in scarlet bags, Volendam with its reds and dark browns, and Marken in a riot of green, vermilion and yellow are a few instances, while in some of the little known parts of Friesland the inhabitants resemble the nondescript pirate chief beloved by the patrons of burlesque melodrama.

Holland is small but fascinating. The tides of history surging through the centuries have not obliterated wholly the evidences of its early struggles as everywhere are traces and spoils of the past left stranded like bits of wreckage yet retaining an aura about them which conjures up to the mind a moving and inspiring story.

The names of Dutch things are a joy though occasionally a trial. What could be more descriptive than the word "Klompen," which means clogs, or more tender than the word "Kinderen," for children? As a counterblast there is the village of *Alblasserdam* surrounded by towns and hamlets, most of whose names have the same termination. Just as "Penelope" in Ireland, after seeing Ballyshannon, suggested a tour to *all* the "Bally" places so might be suggested a visit to all the "dam" places in Holland, a start being made from a fairly well-known hotel in Amsterdam whose full postal address looks like

a picturesque arrangement of profanities. Holland is, undoubtedly, the country of the "dammed." It is the land where you may obtain, what *Punch* calls, "satisfaction without profanity."

It was my second visit to the country of dykes and windmills. On the previous occasion I had been to the larger towns and had not time to see Volendam and Marken, the two places around which this account is written. The way thither involves several changes. The train from the Hook reached Amsterdam at 9-0 o'clock in the morning and after breakfast I went down to the harbour and booked my passage to Volendam. The journey is in three stages. First of all you board a tiny steamer which is called, for short, a "Havenstoombootdienst," and, if you are unlucky as I was, you will be the only male passenger, the boat usually being crowded with Zuider Zee fisher-girls going back to their homes after an early morning visit to the City. It was a somewhat trying experience, though it might have been worse had I understood the language they were speaking. There are a number of bridges under which the boat has to pass, and some of them are so low that it is necessary for the passengers to duck down as the steamer without pausing glides underneath. Strangers in the land are considered fair game for a Dutch joke, and, no warning being given, the unwary foreigner will contribute to the gaiety of Holland by leaving a portion of his head adhering to one of its bridges. Luckily for myself I had been on the canals before, and when at the psychological moment I ducked my head, I was amused to see that a number of the girls had become so excited in the anticipatory enjoyment of an excruciating humorosity that they did not look out for themselves. I was not to blame for what happened,

but from the looks I received one might have imagined that I was the blackest criminal alive.

After more "duckings" we landed, and began the second stage of the journey by a steam tram with a wheezy boiler-contrivance pulling four carriages after it. The route lies through the open country and after three hours jolting it becomes slightly monotonous. The engine continually loses its puff which means that the male passengers get out and smoke while it gets its breath back. We pass through wide green pastures dotted with solemn-eyed cows and bedecked with gesticulating windmills, the track running on the edges of the roads and along the willow tufted banks of the canals. When a village is reached the tram slows down to a crawl, the guard gets off and walks in front of the engine down the main street clanging a big bell. The entire population turns out to watch our passing. It is the event of the day. At every window and door are peering faces, and on each side we are escorted by an extraordinary number of small children in clattering sabots. These villages are wonderfully clean and bright. Each house is different in style and colour from its neighbour, and under an intense sunlight the effect is dazzling. At every stopping-place the number of passengers lessened, and I was the only one left when the tram came to the end of its journey at Edam. Here my luggage was taken up by a taciturn individual in a marvellous patchwork coat who beckoned me to follow him. It was a hot day with a blistering sun and after walking down many shining streets we finally came to a weed-covered waterway with a little cove under a clump of trees. He plumped my bag into an old worm-eaten sailing boat and indicated in three solemn and expressive gestures that somebody would come along presently and convey me and my baggage along the canals to Volendam. He then wandered away.

Time is of no account on the Zuider Zee; nobody ever thinks of worrying about anything, therefore, I got out of the quivering sunlight and into the boat and sat smoking in the green gloom for half an hour until a fat youth encased in balloon-like trousers drifted slowly on board. He wore a rapt and ecstatic smile which widened alarmingly when I offered him a cigar. After lighting his smoke from mine he displayed a little energy and hoisted a sail. Then began the last stage of the journey and in more time than it would take to walk we drew quietly into Volendam, the region of strange odours.

Volendam dates back to the fourteenth century. It is underneath the level of the sea and nestles close by the protecting dyke, the top of which is used as the main street. As you step on to it you annihilate time, as it were, and spring back a few hundred years. In one stride you are back in the past. A first impression has a dreamlike quality. The narrow streets with their rows of tiny wooden huts with pointed gables suggest a colony of dolls houses. The fishermen, giant-like, bronzed and imperturbable, are clad in fur hats, magenta jackets and the baggiest of baggy breeches made from a material closely resembling in appearance and texture the felting used for the roofing of hen-coops. The apparent unreality of things is enhanced by their behaviour. Here there is no "eaving of 'arf bricks" at the stranger. Instead, the traveller finds himself taken for granted. Without even a glance of curiosity he is accepted as part of the cosmos. As I saw these big fellows kick off their wooden *klompen* outside their doors and stoop to get inside their houses, it suggested to my fancy the men of Brobdingnag attempting to live in Lilliput.

I was to stay at the Café Spaander which is the only hotel in the village. It is a delightful little inn built

mostly of wood and resting on piles at the edge of the dyke. The charm of the place is incommunicable by mere words. On the threshold the expected visitor receives a welcome so hearty that he is almost bewildered and wonders whether he has been mistaken for a long lost relative. And the warmth of the greeting is only equalled by the sorrow at his departure. Moreover he will realise before a week is out that this friendliness is sincere and genuine. The café is and might well be famous. There were about twenty-five visitors of various nationalities staying there when I visited it. Most of them were strangers to each other, but we all became united in the brotherhood of Art. Volendam happily has no attraction for the ordinary sight-seer as the only accommodation is at the Café Spaander where, a visitor who betrayed no inclination to paint or sketch would feel himself to be a sort of pariah and would be regarded with grave suspicion.

"Of course you have come to paint, Mr. So and So?" No? Then you draw with the pen or pencil? *No?* Ah! Then you must have come with a camera to take photographs? *NO?* Blank astonishment and confusion ensues. Outraged artists attack in a body and stab the intruder to death with palette knives and portcrayons.

It is a fact that a few years ago a famous painter was actually refused lodging there until he produced his sketch book. Many well-known artists have stayed at the café and most of them have presented a painting or drawing to the proprietor. The wooden walls of the long low rooms are covered with them. There are paintings by Stanhope Forbes, Moffat Lindner, Cassiers, Josef Israels, and many others. The lighter side is represented by Phil May, Tom Browne, and Will Owen, who have contributed many amusing sketches. The collection has now attained some importance and must be worth a considerable sum.

It is pleasant to think over the happy days spent in this antique village; rambling about on the cobbled edges of the canals seeking subjects for sketches, lying on the grassy slope of the landward side of the dyke smoking aromatical cigars at two a penny—who could help being a philosopher with cigars so good and cheap—working at a drawing in the shade of the hut where *klompen* are sold in strings like onions, with the model blinking in the sun and looking contemplatively happy at the prospect of earning fivepence an hour. In the evening walking along the top of the dyke, with the waves of the Zuider Zee gently lapping the seaward slope, while down below on the other side could be seen the Volendam milk maids with their white-winged caps glimmering in the dusk bringing the cattle home to the sheds. And later on to get to the end of the wooden jetty and look back at Volendam sleeping in the starry silence. The lights from the inn stain the water with gleaming coloured shapes. Away to the right the moon splashes the sea with silver, against which an arm of the harbour stands out intensely black as if painted with indian ink, while the sailors' beacon at the end of the quay communicates to the water one wriggling worm-like reflection. And then the nights spent in the café itself. The hotel is built on the edge of the dyke near to the harbour, and after dinner we sat out on the broad wooden verandah with our coffee, watching the fishing smacks gliding home through the grey-green water, while the last rays from the setting sun fired their brown sails to glowing orange and lit up the tops of the worm-eaten harbour piles as with a yellow torchlight. The boats would sometimes pass so close to us that we could hear the steady snore of the water under their bows and, as they neared the harbour entrance, they would slip one behind another and resolve themselves into a stately pro-



cession, each vessel carrying a silent and statuesque figure at the helm. Later on a big white moon would float up into the heavens and flood everything with radiance. Inside, the tavern was bright and shining with cleanliness, and when it got too chilly for us to sit outside we continued the evening in the long low bar-room which is the main apartment of the Café Spaander. This room has a boarded floor which through continuous scrubbing has become bleached almost white. Scattered about are small mahogany tables, and at one end is a piano standing near some brackets which are holding beautiful models of ships. Oil paintings, charcoal sketches and water colour drawings in great variety convert the room into a miniature picture gallery. It was here that we spent most of our nights. A mixed company, with a bond of fellowship, we never found the evenings too long. A few would play billiards, one would tinkle on the piano, there would be a group playing cards, and other groups chatting away unconscious of the fact that the little French artist was making ludicrous caricatures of them in his sketch book. We smoked continuously until the features of the room became somewhat indistinct in the blue haze. Every one was contented and seemed to catch the infectious happiness which emanated from the host and hostess and their charming daughters, who were interspersed among the visitors helping to make things go. Towards 11 o'clock, when the company had thinned down, about a dozen of us, including "Old Spaander," would gather round a table with our smokes and liquids and yarn away till midnight, when the host would solemnly and fervently wring each of us by the hand and express the hope that we would sleep soundly.

About the middle of the week a fisherman took me over to Marken in his sailing boat. Marken is a small



island whose early history is unknown. Once the property of the Monastery of the White Friars and afterwards the haunt of pirates it has continually waged war against the sea and succeeded in keeping its head fairly dry underneath the sea level. It is completely surrounded by a strong sea-wall which is not always strong enough and has been kept under suspicion for centuries. Even now it is not safe, the island is often under water and the inhabitants made captive on the mounds on which their settlements are built. Marken is not big, you can walk round it in three or four hours. But the Markeners are bigger even than the Volendamers. They are a distinctive race, entirely original in their manners and appearance. How they got there and from whence they came nobody knows. There is a suggestion of the Laplander about them. The villages are built on wooden piles or mounds of earth and are separated from one another by about half a mile, and in the centre of the island is a big grass-covered mound. This is the burial ground, the reason of its height being apparent when you are told that the winter tides break down the weaker portions of the dyke and burst in flood over the lower levels.

I had arranged with the fisherman the night before to sail me over, but when I awoke and looked out of the window the sea was grey and cruel looking and there was a strong wind blowing high and sonorous with a sound like that which is heard in a ship's rigging. I thought the visit would have to be put off but the gale, however, died down, the sun came out before we started, and there seemed every promise of a fine day. We arrived about 11 o'clock in the morning. It was blazing hot when we got there, and the fisherwomen in their vivid embroidered costumes looked exceedingly gay as they walked about the harbour. The prevailing colours they wear are vermillion,

yellow and green, and nearly all of them have tow-coloured hair. It was a gorgeous sight. They seemed to have burgeoned out into tropical flowers.

On the island itself the predominating colour is green. All shades are to be found on the houses; olive green, bottle green, pea green, and apple green, and where the paint has been left long to the action of the sun and salt air it has turned to brilliant verdigris. The contrast for which the eye seeks is supplied by the clothing of the inhabitants and the great red roof-tiles which are curved like those of a pagoda. The sun poured on everything with intense brilliance and the pitch on the lower boards of the huts seemed to sputter in the burning glare. I rambled about for an hour or two and after visiting four of the settlements was glad to rest in the quiet pool of shadow made by the little church and consider the greenness of the Marken land and the exceeding great flatness thereof. Dutch weather is as uncertain as our own. A faint breeze sprang up bringing dark-looking clouds which distributed the sunlight into moving irregular patches. I rose to go and, turning a corner, stumbled upon a funeral. It brought me to a standstill for it was not like an ordinary one.

The first thing that struck me was the entire absence of morbid interest on the part of the neighbours. Neither was there any ostentatious display of grief from the mourners. There were six bearers who had just hoisted the coffin on to their shoulders as I caught sight of them, and they seemed to be awaiting some signal. A bell began to toll from the burial mound, and at the second stroke the procession started with the priest walking in front. The coffin had a plain black pall draped over it, and following behind were a number of fisher-girls in plain black and white. The simplest things are very often the greatest.

This was exemplified here. The vulgar trappings of woe which usually accompany a funeral were absent and in their place was simplicity and sincerity. As the procession moved slowly and steadily by the weedy waterways, the sky grew darker with impending storm and, by a strange freak, the heavy thunder-blue clouds were urged along in the same direction and apparently at the same pace. The bell ceased tolling when the cemetery was reached, and almost immediately the sky began to crackle like musketry. I could not see plainly from my shelter owing to the rain which now began to descend in torrents. The remainder of the ceremony was seen indistinctly, and the thunder became more frequent and punctuated by flashes of lightning. An immense gloom had descended on everything, intensified by the sudden pallid flares and bursts of sound. Nature was giving to the dead fisherman a magnificent requiem, and it seemed to invest him with an immense and portentous dignity. The ceremony on the mound went on without signs of hurry, and towards its conclusion the storm began to abate, and ragged strips of lemon-coloured light broke through the clouds. The gloom rapidly lifted and as the burial party returned the downpour ceased, the sounds of the storm died away into distant mutterings, and the sun shone out again on the glistening roofs. The warm rays danced everywhere flashing from rills and pools, and setting the wet grass all a-twinkle till the little island became like a big green jewel shimmering in the sea. As I made my way to the harbour a venerable stork with long red legs flapped from out the remains of a wrecked boat whose gaunt ribs stuck out of the grass like the bones of some long deceased monster, and winged its way over the house tops.

Before returning to Volendam I had a look into some of the Marken houses. They are all more or less alike with their Delft tiles, ancient pottery, old oak and shining brass-ware, but they are all beautiful. The gods be

thanked! the Markeners are not yet "civilised." They know nought of the cult of the antimacassar nor do they establish as an article of decoration in their homes, the lone bulrush in the painted drainpipe.

One of the remaining days I spent at Broek which has the reputation of being the cleanest village on earth. Here are to be found the trimmest and most formal of gardens, shippens with curtains to the windows and strips of carpet on the floor of the stables. Round its name has gathered wondrous tales to the effect that the inhabitants prefer to live on raw food rather than soil their cooking utensils, and that boys are employed to blow the dust out of the cracks between the paving stones every half hour during the day. Space will not admit of a description of the famous "dead" towns with their grass-grown streets and dilapidated houses mute with the poetry that accompanies architectural decay, nor of the romantic origin of the Zuider Zee with its half forgotten legends of buried cities sleeping beneath its waters.

Many impressions crowd in great variety upon the mind but among those which have been described are the two that appear most vividly to the memory—the grey-green evening sea at Volendam with the sunset fire on the sails of the fishing boats and the burial of the fisherman on Marken Eiland in the midst of the thunder and lightning and the sweeping curtains of rain.





## EPISTOLARY WISDOM.

By THOMAS NEWBIGGING.

THE most important literature the world has known is couched in epistolary form, and it will be read and pondered while time and the habitable globe endure. Its sacred character is guarantee for its immortality. I need scarcely say that I refer to the epistles of Holy Writ. But I reverently pass these by. The subjects of my theme are of another kind, and entirely secular in character.

Neither do I intend to deal with the epistolary writings of authors outside these islands, great as has been the effect produced by some of them on the thoughts and actions of mankind.

My purpose is to call attention, briefly, to some neglected or little-read letters by certain well-known English authors, which in these sensation-seeking days are too much overlooked.

I do not refer to the private letters of authors and others collected and published after the decease of the writers. The letters of distinguished men, such as Pope, Gray, Horace Walpole, Cowper, Byron, Lamb, Stevenson, T. E. Brown, the Manx poet, and others, might well form the subject of a delightful essay in an attempt to portray the living characteristics of the writers; their domestic and public life; their successes and failures; the very colour and texture of their minds; their hidden secrets poured into

the ear of friendship; the unaffected language in which their strength and also their weaknesses are unwittingly laid bare. And, it must be confessed also in the instances where future publication had been anticipated, the stilted and artificial strain in which the sentiments of the writers are sometimes couched, themselves deceived whilst their aim was to deceive a future generation of readers, but equally self-revealing as the others, though that was the last thing intended. My remarks relate to letters ostensibly addressed to particular individuals, but which, in reality, were intended should be read by all and sundry.

It will hardly be denied, I think, that much of our choicest English literature is enshrined in this form, it having been practised by some of our best authors as the medium for conveying their thoughts. It was resorted to more by seventeenth, eighteenth and early nineteenth century writers than by those of present or more recent times. One fashion in the eighteenth century and early in the nineteenth was the writing of novels, the inculcation of precepts for the conduct of life, and the recounting of travels and adventures in a series of letters. The examples that occur to us amongst novels, are those of Richardson's "Pamela," "Clarissa," and "Sir Charles Grandison"; Smollett's "Humphrey Clinker," Scott's "Rob Roy" and "Redgauntlet." Amongst travels are Goldsmith's "Citizen of the World," Scott's "Paul's Letters to his Kinsfolk," and, more recently, Lord Dufferin's "Letters from High Latitudes." Of books intended to regulate conduct, we have Chesterfield's "Letters to his Son," Dr. Gregory's "Legacy to his Daughters," and Hussey's "Letters from an Elder to a Younger Brother"; and of letters political there are Swift's "Drapier's Letters," the public letters of Burke, the letters of "Junius," and Sydney Smith's "Peter Plymly's Letters." These are, of

course, only some of the most striking examples of epistolary writing. Many other books of this class were produced within the period previously named. Some of these were original enough, others had but little intrinsic merit and are now forgotten.

This species of composition has witnessed a revival at the present day and we have some admirable writings of the kind, in essay form especially, which will live; much of it again is hardly worthy of consideration and will probably not survive beyond its decade. Be this as it may, I have preferred to go back to an earlier day and to authors, some of whose works have stood the test of time in regard to quality, though they are not as much read as they deserve to be.

"When a new book appears, I read an old one." If Charles Lamb's cynical and sage practice is worthy of imitation at all, it surely is in regard to those books to which I will draw your attention, and especially to Goldsmith's "Letters of a Citizen of the World." This book is an exemplification of the art of seeing ourselves as others see us, and nothing is more striking than the folly of many of our fashions, customs and ideas viewed through the eyes of Lien Chi Altangi, the Chinese Philosopher. His irony and sarcasm are delicious. He girds at our national and individual weaknesses, foibles and delinquencies with irresistible verve and humour. The insight into human nature which he displays, proves Goldsmith to have been one of the wisest philosophers of his day, notwithstanding that the tenour of his own life would seem to contradict such an assumption—so difficult is it to unravel the mystery of one human soul.

To anyone of a bookish turn, the charm of the letters is great. A vein of light pleasantry runs through them

all. The ludicrous effect of what might be considered ordinary events and circumstances by those at home, is wonderfully striking as they are depicted by the Chinese Philosopher. Whether you agree with all the sentiments expressed, or not, or the strict relevancy of all the arguments advanced, or not, your sense of enjoyment is more than gratified.

The scheme of the letters gives him scope for variety. He treats of men and women, of gratitude and pity and love, of riches and poverty, of literature and art, of authors and critics, of physicians and quacks, and a hundred other themes, and he has much to say that is racy about them all. The letters, too, are interspersed with anecdote and story, both humorous and pathetic, and garnished with wise maxims and reflections—all pregnant with acute observation. The character of "The Man in Black" is admirably drawn, so also are those of Mr. Tibbs and his wife. In short, he enriches all that he touches, extracting from the very dross of life the pure metal that lies hidden within it.

His style, also is excellent—simple, clear and strong, like the steady flow of a deep river; ever and anon, as it broadens out over the shallows, broken up into ripples of wit, humour and satire. His choice of words is apt, and the epigrammatical point of his sentences lends piquancy to his arguments and his descriptions. The diverse subjects on which he treats possess much of the charm of novelty by the fresh lights he throws upon them, be the theme ever so hackneyed or even commonplace; and the reader is carried from page to page with growing interest. Next only to "The Vicar of Wakefield," and scarcely excepting that delightful story, "The Letters of a Citizen of the World," are, in my opinion, the most charming of Goldsmith's writings in prose.



There is this fundamental difference between the construction of these letters and some others, that the writer had to assume the character, and, necessarily, the ideas and modes of thinking and expression of a far-eastern traveller in Europe. In most of the other letters to which I shall refer, the authors, although each disguised under an assumed name, are expressing their own native and personal views, and are, therefore, to that extent untrammelled in the writing. In composing the "Citizen" Letters, Goldsmith chose the far more difficult task, and if he does not always succeed in maintaining the Eastern guise in perfection, it is because the difficulties were almost insurmountable.

It is a subject for wonder that Goldsmith, who evinces so much of shrewd commonsense in his writings, and possessing, obviously, a clear judgment in discoursing of men and things, should have failed so egregiously to exhibit these qualities in the conduct of his own life. The enigma is, perhaps, insoluble. It would almost appear as though when he had his pen in hand his good genie stood by and lent inspiration to his thoughts, unkindly deserting him when he laid his pen aside.

In 1809, there were published anonymously, "At the particular request of a Person of Distinction," as the writer states in his preface, two volumes entitled, "Letters from an Irish Student in England to his Father in Ireland." The student in question, it appears, came to London to pursue legal studies to qualify himself for the Bar. These letters, without manifesting any special intellectual or literary powers, are written with great naïveté. Their style is less masculine than the others with which I am dealing, but they are, nevertheless, interesting and sometimes amusing reading. They are a curious mélange of

personal adventures, opinions on men and events, anecdotes and descriptions of what the student witnessed and heard and encountered in this country. They deal with all kinds of subjects both of an ordinary and out-of-the-way sort, treated with an engaging frankness along with some priggishness, and they convey information that would have to be sought for in many volumes—if, indeed, it could be found elsewhere—and nearly all gathered in the course of his personal observation.

He describes the different Inns of Court, the lawyers and barristers of the time; the painters and sculptors; the various theatres, actors, actresses, and operatic stars, of whom there is a wonderful galaxy of well-remembered names. He tells the story of his attendance and of what he heard and witnessed at the Royal Society's lectures—all full of curious interest. He refers to the practice of duelling, which was then of almost everyday occurrence, and, as an example of the utterly ridiculous incidents that led to the fighting of duels in those days, our student relates an anecdote of one of his warm-hearted, irritable, Irish countrymen, who having asserted that he had seen anchovies grow upon the hedges in the West Indies, an English gentleman present said "That was impossible," upon which the other replied, "By heavens it is true, and as you doubt it it is necessary that you should fight me." They went out; Pat wounded his antagonist mortally, and as he lay dying on the ground, the Irishman leaned over him and said, "By Jabers, Sir, you were right and I was quite wrong; for I recollect now they were capers and not anchovies."

Our student wanders into subjects that are tabooed in these more squeamish times. He has something to say about beggars, thieves, the gay world, ladies of fashion, methodists and methodism—then becoming a power in the

religious world. He recounts his visits to the various prisons and describes their horrible condition. He is shocked at the custom, which he witnessed, of allowing men, women and children of a low class to ascend the scaffold immediately after an execution had taken place, for the purpose of having their necks, knees and other parts of the body rubbed with the hand of the dead malefactor, whose death-damp was believed to be a sovereign remedy for wens, the King's-evil, and other disorders; the executioners, who received *douceurs*, assisting at the ceremony. He has much to say about lotteries, which were then common; on election incidents and tricks; of places adjacent to the Metropolis, amongst the rest Margate, which he calls "the wash-tub of London," and other themes *ad infinitum*. Altogether, it is a curious work, affording as it does an insight into the manners and customs of our forebears a hundred years ago.

There is always a tendency to compare and contrast to their disadvantage the minor works of great writers with their more splendid achievements, and so to disparage the former without good reason. Some of the works of Sir Walter Scott have suffered neglect from this cause. As a matter of fact, the writings thus almost despitely treated, are, for the most part, of such excellence that they would have established the fame of the author had nothing else proceeded from his pen. They are secondary lights owing solely to the meridian splendour of his other productions. I refer particularly to his biographies of Dryden and Swift, to his shorter biographical sketches of Richardson, Fielding, Smollett, Sterne, and a host of others; to his essays on chivalry, romance and the drama, and to his "Paul's Letters." A well-stored mind, a kindly and noble heart, a brilliant imagination, a ready and graphic

pen—each of these contributed to the making of Scott's "Paul's Letters to his Kinsfolk."

It may be well to point out, that Mr. R. H. Hutton, who wrote the brochure on Scott in the "English Men of Letters" series, speaks disparagingly of "Paul's Letters," which leads one to think that either he had not read them at all, or he had read them very perfunctorily. Hutton says that "they are not at all above the mark of a good special correspondent." That remark, I take it, is either hard on the "good special correspondents," or it pays them such a compliment as most of them would receive with satisfaction. But, as I have already said, it is the fate of the minor writings of distinguished men to be pushed aside for their more famous productions.

Lockhart gives a very different estimate of the "Letters," when he says that they are "a delightful record" of Scott's expedition to the Continent after Waterloo. "The whole man," he remarks, "just as he was, breathes in every line, with all his compassionate and benevolent sympathy of heart, all his sharpness of observation and sober shrewdness of reflection; all his enthusiasm for nature, for country life, for simple manners and simple pleasures, mixed up with an equally glowing enthusiasm, at which many may smile, for the tiniest relics of feudal antiquity—and last, not least, a pulse of physical rapture for the 'circumstance of war,' which bears witness to the blood of Boltfoot and Fire-the-Braes."

The occasion of the letters was the visit that Scott paid to Brussels and to Paris in 1815, immediately after Waterloo, with a view, undoubtedly, besides the pleasure of travel, of collecting material for literary purposes, and, as the phrase goes, to get "local colour."

No doubt, patience is needed in the stressful times of to-day to sit down and read "Paul's Letters"; but it is

certain that patience and assiduity in such case meet with their due reward; for the charm of their style and the fulness and interest of the information contained in them, is, for the student especially, like digging in a rich mine. The whole ground is auriferous, the valuable ore sparkles on every side, and now and again a big nugget is turned up to delight the patient digger.

In the letters there is an engaging account of Antwerp with its Art treasures and its glorious Cathedral. Vivid descriptions of other places and of scenery crowd the pages, along with antiquarian lore, historical facts and incidents of valour. The condition of France under the Bourbons; the banishment to and return of Bonaparte from Elba; the field of Waterloo, and the events that led up to that memorable battle ending in victory for the British arms—all are described with masterly skill. Indeed, his comments on the far-reaching effect of the occurrences have something of prophetic foresight and value.

He gives a minute panorama of the road from Brussels to Paris after the great battle, with a picture of the ruin and desolation which are the concomitants of a conquering army. The magnificent palace and grounds of Chantilly are described at length. They contain also a striking description of Paris during the occupation by the Allied Sovereigns. He speaks of the Art treasures of the City as they then existed, comprising many of those despoiled by Bonaparte from the Low Countries, from Vienna, the German States and Italy; most of which had to be surrendered to their rightful owners on the fall of the Empire.

Probably there will be differences of opinion in regard to the degree of acceptance to be given to the author's views at all points. But this much is to be said, that

Scott had the advantage of gaining his knowledge at first hand and on the spot immediately after the various occurrences he so ably depicts took place. And although he might look with prejudiced and sympathetic eyes on the successes of the troops under Wellington, yet he cannot be charged with any wilful departure from the strict canons of truth in the wonderful story he so graphically unfolds.

On the other hand, he was too near Bonaparte to judge dispassionately of the terrible genius of the man, and consequently to do full justice to his great personality—especially when the smoke of Waterloo had scarcely lifted at the time he wrote. Neither is it to be expected that the expressed opinions of even a close observer of the momentous events of the hour should be in all respects the calmer verdict of later minds. As Dr. Martineau says, “Not till the proximate past has retreated far, and even the echoes of party passion have died away, is real historical impartiality attainable.” But however that may be, Scott brought a trained and judicial mind and a rare judgment to the consideration of those events; and he was of that age (forty-five years) at the time of their happening that precluded the indiscriminate exaggeration that often accompanies youthful enthusiasm. Notwithstanding all possible reservations, the “Letters of Paul” are masterly descriptive and historical documents, and should be read by those desirous of gaining an insight into the events of a period so full of interest to the student of history, and of such paramount importance to this country and to Europe.

It is one of the charms of the letters that they are ostensibly addressed to different persons of varying tastes, opinions and idiosyncrasies—though in point of fact, they were all sent to his wife at Melrose. For example, to his

spinster sister, Margaret; his cousin Peter, an ardent politician; a laird, fond of statistics; a country clergyman, and to a cousin, a veteran major on half pay; and, necessarily, they each treat of matters that might be presumed specially to interest the respective recipients. This mild subterfuge, by which he is enabled to introduce his inimitable touches of pawky humour, lends enhanced interest to the epistles, and prevents anything like monotony in the style or in the treatment of the subjects.

The title of "Peter's Letters to his Kinsfolk," by John Gibson Lockhart, was evidently an imitation of the title of Scott's "Paul's Letters." But the matter of the epistles is of quite another kind. They are assumed to be written by an old Welsh physician, Dr. Peter Morris, on the occasion of a visit to the Northern portion of the Kingdom, and for the greater part (though he also visits Glasgow and Abbotsford) contain a vivid picture of Edinburgh as it existed in the second decade of the nineteenth century. Its distinguished men of letters, painters, college professors, divines, advocates, attorneys, politicians, booksellers, with the "Society" of the time; the celebrations, parties, balls, and routs (*conversaziones*), all are depicted with a picturesque and often pungent pen. Scotsman as Lockhart was, he did not spare the assailable weaknesses and peccadillos of his countrymen, nor the narrowness of their religious views and partial or mistaken literary verdicts—though, it must be confessed that he had a high admiration for the virtues of the Scottish character, and takes opportunity to exhibit these with no halting pen.

There are in the volumes noteworthy estimates—finely appreciative—of the poetry of Burns and Wordsworth, in opposition to the querulous and short-sighted criticisms of those poets by Jeffrey in the *Edinburgh Review*. Also

a brilliant account of a "Burns' Dinner," in which, alas! the true life of the poet, when he

walked in glory and in joy,  
Following his plough along the mountain's side,

was little dwelt upon; but rather, taking their cue from his poor and often dissipated Dumfries life and without that essential recognition of the humour that underlies and was the true source of all his rich Bacchanalian verses, but simply for fuddling's sake—the steaming punch-bowl was replenished again and again during the evening—as though in degrading themselves they were honouring the genius of the poet.

Lockhart was only twenty-five when he wrote the "Letters," but they display in a marked degree all the qualities of a practised literary hand, worthy the future biographer of the great "Wizard of the North." Altogether, any one who cares to have a series of portraits of the old Edinburgh notabilities at first hand, from a candid critic and ready writer, at a time, too, when the Scottish Capital was the acknowledged literary centre, would do well to read "Peter's Letters." But they contain more enduring matter than mere description. His views of men and things; his wise prevision of events, unbiased by his political opinions, and the charm of his downright literary style, will repay the reader.

The third edition (though, in reality the second—for it is said there was no first) of "Peter's Letters," concludes with a supplementary letter addressed to Coleridge, in which Lockhart defends himself from the aspersions of his critics. For a piece of strong (I cannot say trenchant, because it is too laboured) writing, it has few equals in literature. But the abuse in which it deals, often by



exaggeration, hits wide of the mark, and makes it unpleasant reading. It is, throughout, in marked contrast to the balanced verdicts of the book.

I do not care what a man's political opinions or his religious persuasion or profession may be, he is incorrigible if he fails to be convinced of the justice of the writer's point of view by a careful perusal of the "Letters on the Subject of the Catholics to my Brother Abraham who lives in the Country, by Peter Plymly." But even if unconvinced, he will certainly profit.

These Letters by the Rev. Sydney Smith, (afterwards Canon Residentiary of St. Pauls), ten in number, on the disabilities of the Catholics, were written in the years 1807-8. In the latter year they were collected and published in pamphlet form and ran through sixteen editions. The author was then thirty-eight years of age. They appeared at a critical time, and their effect, "like a spark on a heap of gunpowder" as is said, was instantaneous and widespread.

The inherent force of the author's arguments carried conviction to the minds of all classes of the community. "Who is the writer?" was asked on every hand; but the secret was kept, though there were shrewd suspicions, and it was not until the year 1839, more than thirty years after their publication, that their authorship was publicly acknowledged.

If ever we are inclined to be narrow in our views, and ready to deny to others the privileges which we ourselves enjoy, we should take and read "Peter Plymly"; not so much for the subject—for that was ephemeral like most burning questions, not for the style alone, though that is admirable—but for the splendid examples of broad-minded sanity and charity which are stamped on every page.

I do not know of anything to surpass in argument the "Plymly Letters." And how creditable they were to the writer as a member of the Church of England and a clergyman! His sentences are like strong gusts of wind blowing across our northern moors, bringing health to the mind as these do to the body. His periods are muscular in strength and rich in commonsense and far-sighted wisdom; and his religious spirit lends dignity to the views he enunciates. But he dares to be savage as occasion calls, and he seizes a fallacy as a terrier grips a rat and shakes the life out of it.

The subjects that engage his pen in the "Plymly Letters," have, as I have already remarked, to a large extent become matter of history; but the style of his slashing arguments is applicable to the exposure of every kind of injustice, and has, therefore, a perennial value. In these Letters of his, Smith held the right end of the stick, and he used the *flagellum* to some purpose. His noble scorn of injustice and his chastisement of the authors and perpetrators of it, whether from ignorance or contrariness, are among the richest assets in our past history. And yet his raillery and sterner rebukes, if strong, are kindly, for they are accompanied by an abounding humour and wit. Occasionally he is slap-dash, with a grain of coarseness in his rushing sentences, but that is a fault of most disquisitions of the kind, produced when passions run high, and is therefore almost inherent in the nature of such things. He was brave, too, as he was honest, where bravery meant encountering risks from which the bravest father of a family might shrink without disgrace. When one remembers that the Letters in question were written a hundred years ago, at a time when there was greatly less freedom of speech and writing than prevails to-day, one is lost in admiration of the bold spirit they display, and

especially as emanating from a beneficed Anglican clergyman.

The writer was in truth one of the bravest-hearted men that ever breathed. A pattern in all his domestic relations; a staunch friend, generous to a fault, and every inch a gentleman—qualities even more endearing than his splendid literary ability, his power of argumentation, his nervous grasp of a subject, his unflagging humour and his sparkling wit.

In the course of my references to the different works, I have refrained from giving quotations. To have quoted at any length would have added inordinately to the length of the essay. Besides, anything in that way would be like selecting a pure stone from a diamondiferous mine; or, to vary the simile, like detaching a few stones from a sightly edifice and handing them round as a sample of the whole structure. And then, too, the difficulty of selection, where there are so many and varied beauties, is an ungrateful task. Where there is so much of literary and historical wealth and value, it is best that the reader should browse for himself in the works themselves and at first hand.





## THE CHARACTERISTICS OF YORKSHIRE MOORLAND SCENERY.

By GEORGE MILNER.

IT may be conceded that the three greatest things in nature are the Sea, the Mountain, and the Moor. They are the greatest because each of them seems to suggest some participation in the quality which we call the infinite. We look up with awe at the mountain—its head in the clouds, its sides worn by a thousand storms, torn by headlong torrents, and seamed by the grinding glaciers, its base resting, perhaps, in a girdle of dark foliage, or on tracts of green or sunny meadows. If we have the blood of the old English sea rovers in us, the sea is an intoxication; the heart leaps with the leap of the wave whose white crest is snatched off by the furious wind; or is soothed by the recurring and rhythmic motion of the long Atlantic swell; in moonlight we follow with rapture the silver causeway which starts from the ship's side and reaches, unbroken, the farthest horizon; and under starlight there comes to us a sense of appalling mystery and vastness. On the moorland many of the sensations connected with the ocean are repeated—the loneliness, the isolation, and the feeling that we are ourselves, for a time, the living centre of things. The moorland is the arena where wide-sweeping clouds and shadows are at their best. Perhaps

the finest thing of all is when some cloud of mountain-form and size rises slowly into view, gorgeously coloured by the morning or the evening sun, or, at noon, a mass of marmoreal whiteness—one-half being below the horizon and one-half above it.

In one respect the moor has the advantage of the sea. There are small beauties as well as great. The heather, and the fern, and the bog-myrtle, the harebell and the grass-of-Parnassus, with a hundred other shy blooms and mosses are about our feet, while the birds springing from the earth soar above our heads into the blue.

In speaking of the Yorkshire moorland I have, for the purposes of this paper, principally in my mind that particular tract which encloses what is called the Upper Valley of the Wharfe. Until a recent extension of railway facilities this region, unlike the lower reaches of the river near Bolton Abbey, was comparatively unvisited and unknown. Even now, it may be described as sequestered, and as retaining much of its primitive wildness, beauty and simplicity. Practically the valley begins at Grassington, where the railway ends. From there it runs upward for some eighteen or twenty miles, past Buckden, and by Langstrathdale, to Beckermond, where the famous Wharfe begins its course.

This Upper Valley of the Wharfe has its unique features. It may not display the perfect beauty which distinguishes the lower reaches of the river by Bolton and Barden and Burnsall. It is less richly wooded, and leans rather to sternness and wildness. As you ascend, the moorland ridges rise from the river-bed on either hand with a distinct and sharp sky-line; a plantation here and there breaks in, but for the most part they are covered with grass only, and everywhere the grey crags are dominant, either crowning the ridge or showing through on the

slopes. At Kilnsey a huge rock, called Kilnsey Crag, juts out into the level of the valley. It is worth making the journey to see this phenomenal piece of rock-work alone. It is only rivalled by that Gordale Scar which Wordsworth celebrates in a well-known sonnet. Beyond Kilnsey you pass through the quaint little village of Kettlewell. All the way there are delicious glimpses of the Wharfe, and when you reach Buckden you are in the heart of the Moorland. Here the hills close round you, and herds of deer may be seen coming down from the high moorland, through the thick woods which skirt the lower reaches. Here, too, behind the village may be explored the Buckden Glen,—a piece of scenery eminently characteristic of Yorkshire moorland—a deep and narrow rift in the hill-side along which three separate falls, one above the other, come down to the Wharfe. For pictorial purposes this is the finest “bit” on the journey, and you know not which to admire most—the perfect and classic beauty of the falls or the wildness which surrounds them.

Beyond Buckden you come into Langstrathdale, which it is said that Chaucer knew and alluded to in the “Canterbury Pilgrimage,” though, it must be admitted, upon but slender authority. Langstrathdale does not, as one might expect, increase in wildness as you ascend, but it furnishes many scenes of pastoral beauty. The Wharfe it with you all the way, and is ever changing—sometimes a series of falls, and then a smooth broad stream; still higher—and again contrary to what might be expected—the stream becomes broad and shallow, but with here and there an exquisite fall of a few feet, making a complete realisation of the ever-remembered lines:—

Shallow rivers by whose falls  
Melodious birds sing madrigals.

Beyond this you reach Beckermond, where the actual source of the Wharfe may be traced. To follow a river thus to its well-spring among the wild and lovely moorland is surely one of the greatest pleasures which the traveller can enjoy. Perhaps it is still better to trace the course of a stream downward—noticing the purity of, and, probably, the insignificance of its source, the obstacles which it has to overcome, the increase of power and volume as it rolls, perchance, among great rocks or overhanging woods, its possible degradation and enslavement, the victim of “base uses;” its escape from bondage, and its final absorption in the tides of the ocean—because we have then more perfectly realised the familiar image of human life.

It may be worth while to indicate briefly some of the localities where the character of the Yorkshire moorland may be further studied with advantage.

There is, to begin with, what may be called the Blackstone Edge district, where Lancashire abuts upon Yorkshire. This is easily reached, being not far from Manchester. It is a glorious place for a long ramble in the cloudless noons of summer, or when the autumn sunsets redden the decaying ferns till they seem to burn like fire; but it is best of all in a hard winter when nature on the moorland shows her savage and hostile side. I remember when at the first sign of a deep snow coming on, I used to say, with Waugh in one of his finest songs:—

“I’m off to the moors again.”

That Blackstone Edge can be as wild and inhospitable in winter as any stretch of moorland in the land many a lost and benighted wanderer knows. There is danger, too, even in the daylight. I was once, when rambling alone in the district, caught by a fierce blast of wind, lifted off my feet, carried over a narrow rutted lane, in which there was

not much snow lying, and pitched head foremost into a seven-feet-deep snowdrift, out of which I had great difficulty in extricating myself.

Going further afield, I may draw attention to a fine tract of moorland called Middlemoor. It is best reached from Pateley Bridge. The road follows a stream which runs through many narrow and lofty chasms of rock, each of which is like a miniature Californian cañon.

Then there is a wonderful piece of moorland known as Brimham Rocks, in the neighbourhood of Harrogate. Here vast masses of rock of all sizes and of the most fantastic and monstrous shapes surround you on every side.

Again there is the moorland behind Whitby which has been well described in a book which deserves to be better known than it is: "Forty Years in a Moorland Parish," by the Rev. J. C. Atkinson.

If I were asked to indicate the particular Yorkshire moorland which I think to be finer than any other, I should have no hesitation in saying the large and practically unbroken stretch of pure moorland which lies between Clapham and Hawes, at the entrance to Wensleydale. In 1873 I crossed this tract of country on foot. It was before the existing Midland line to Scotland had been opened, though it was then in process of construction. A few of the primitive wooden shanties erected for the labourers remain to this day—solitary lodges in a vast wilderness, solitary and yet with an aspect which would be tempting to a devotee of the "simple life." Starting from the pleasant hostel at Clapham, I climbed through the thick woods behind the village, and came out on the open moorland. The freshness of the early autumn day had not yet disappeared, but the sun was bright and the sky cloudless. The first impression you get is that of



a vast undulating plain—the common attribute of the moorland, but here we have the additional beauty or grandeur of mountain form. As you walk northward you have on the right hand Penyghent, with its sharp ridge, like the keel of an upturned ship, and on the left Ingleborough and Whernside. When taken in detail the road which you pursue presents endless pictures and points of interest, glimpses of other and distant valleys seen through breaks in the range of hills, wild cloughs and narrow, rushing torrents, the sense and sound of water everywhere, visible to the eye, or burrowing through the earth, “swallows” and “pot-holes,” as they are called, of almost unfathomed depth; strange conformations of rock, great slabs lying flat, like a natural pavement and stretching for miles; and, lastly, there are the human associations, though far apart, the small white farmsteads, each in its sheltering grove of trees, and the flocks of sheep with their shepherds.

At Ribbleshead, where, as its name implies, the well-known river has its source, the road has gained an elevation of some 1,700 feet. At that point it begins to descend towards Hawes and Wensleydale, and also a little more to the west, toward the beautiful valley of the Eden between Appleby and Carlisle.

The Midland Railway to the North now runs across the country in the same direction as that which I followed on foot in 1873. I have been across this moorland many times since the first visit there here alluded to, and on each succeeding occasion my opinion has been strengthened that of all the Yorkshire moorlands this is in every way the finest and the most characteristic.



## A COLLECTION OF POEMS BY SEVERAL HANDS.

By ARTHUR W. FOX.

Editions i., ii. and iii., in 3 vols., 1748; iv. in 4 vols., 1755; v. in 6 vols.; vi., 1763; vii., 1765; viii., 1770; ix., 1770; x., 1775; xi., 1782. In 1768 Pearch published "A Collection of Poems by several Hands" in 4 vols. as a continuation to Dodsley. In 1770 a further supplement was published under the title of "A Collection of the most Esteemed Pieces of Poetry, that have appeared for several years." Other supplements were published by Francis Fawkes and Moses Mendez in 1765.

SINCE Robert Allott, in 1600, published that excessively rare and interesting little volume—"England's Parnassus"—there has flowed a long stream of poetical anthologies, which has by no means run dry in our own day. In 1657 Joshua Poole brought out a small octavo entitled "The English Parnassus; or a Helpe to English Poesie of the Heroicall Kind, Together with a Short Institution to English Poesie by way of Preface." So pompous a title might well lead the student to expect more than he will find in Poole's effort, which will serve him as but an indifferent guide in the subtle art of making poesy, though many of the examples afforded are of the highest order. Between the years 1684 and 1709 was issued Dryden's fine and varied selection of "Miscellany Poems." Even here will be found no little rubbish mingled with much pure gold. The poets of a former generation showed no marked reluctance in bringing their rubbish to be shot by a publisher, especially if they had the additional advantage of the ægis of a great name. No doubt they entertained a

different idea of the excellence of their verses from that which a stern posterity has cherished. In Dryden's, as in all of these collections, many true poems survive, sometimes even in the setting of popular discourse; but these are the *immortelles* of the chaplet, while the rest of the verses are often designedly amusing, more often undesignedly mirth-provoking, sometimes deadly dull. The poetry in the volumes sheds its glamour over the verse; while the multitude of contributors secured one advantage, inasmuch as it tended to guarantee an increased circle of readers. Some bardic brows are bound with unfading laurel, some are decked with long withered, to say nothing of artificial, flowers. Yet both are ranged side by side in the various "Miscellanies" with a delightful impartiality, born either of defective critical judgment, or of an overtenderness to the irritable feelings of the poet-tribe.

It is my present purpose to cull some extracts from a once famous anthology, and at the same time to recall to the land of light some, who have passed into deep darkness by Lethe's river. They were celebrated enough in their own day; some of them even wore the Laureate's wreath and partook blithely of his butt of sherry. Yet few save the curious know anything of their works now, though they were fondly deemed immortal alike by the authors themselves and by the men of their own time. Alas for the immortality of contemporary eulogy! Time is a stern judge, who winnows the wheat from the chaff, which his scorching breath burns with "fire unquenchable," while he does not always spare the wheat itself. The barren slopes of oblivion are crowded with the graves of buried reputations, nor are would-be singers exempt any more than other men of letters from that gloomy cemetery, where it is theirs to "rest in peace," unhonoured, unopened and unread.

Of the poetical "Miscellanies" of the eighteenth century perhaps the best known, by name at least, is "A Collection of Poems by Several Hands," published by Robert Dodsley, himself a poet of some compass and considerable music. The title is comparatively familiar, but the contents are for the most part too much a matter of ancient history to attract the reader of contemporary poetical ineptitude. The three duodecimo volumes made their first appearance in 1748; so great was their popularity that within ten years they passed through five editions, with the addition of volume four in 1753 and of volumes five and six in 1758. Amongst the better known contributors are Gray, Collins, Shenstone, Dr. Johnson, Pope and James Thomson. Indeed, the greater part of the poetry of Gray and Collins adorns this "Collection," while Dr. Johnson's two noble satires—"London" and "The Vanity of Human Wishes"—sound solemnly amid the chorus of less sonorous singers. None of these sturdier sons of song, with the exception of Shenstone, will find a place in this study: they are for the most part too well known to need disturbance, where they sit quaffing nectar with the rest of the mightier immortals. But those punier bards, who make up in multitude what they lack in force, who are often so pathetic and usually so pretty, will serve to illustrate the variety and range of the old publisher's "Collection."

Homer tells us of a wine so potent that its fragrance remained within the cask after nine washings with water. Many of the poets to be cited hereafter bear a similar relation to the greater bards, whom they imitated with a plentiful wash of their own. Yet though these ingenious minstrels owe much of their bouquet to the greater sons of melody, from whose works it has been distilled, each has his share of musical lines. Even if originality be not the distinguishing mark of the class, its members have some

merits, which do not entirely deserve to become "To dull forgetfulness a prey." They sung in their best voice and to their most tuneful strings; they sung at times to no inconsiderable length, and if their lines be not too forceful, the reader must not be too nice. He must take them for what they are with their well-defined limitations; he must realise that most of them were composers of occasional verse, who like Silas Wegg now and again "dropped into poetry" suddenly and without announcing the fact. If he will content himself with moderate expectations, he will find amongst them singers of some humour, more wit, and no mean degree of positive beauty. At the very least he will learn much of the habits and manners of our ancestors, he will read poems which were passed in manuscript from literary coterie to literary coterie, from fair lady's bower to fair lady's bower; he will be able to summon from the past a vivid picture of a bygone age of much repute in its own time and quite undeserving of the comparative neglect into which it has fallen from the too exclusive devotion to nature poetry, which is the fashion of the day.

The first volume of Dodsley's "Collection" opens with a number of grandiloquent poems by Thomas Tickell, whose translation of the First Book of the "Iliad" Addison vainly, and not without malice aforethought, endeavoured to set up in rivalry to the version of Pope. In these laboured exercises of his Muse the somewhat flatulent stream of hacknied description, occasional wit and resonant eulogy, flows prattling along like a broad shallow river; nor need the greater poet have manifested so venomous a severity to his more commonplace rival. Pope has survived and will survive in spite of adverse critics, who fail to grip his real excellence; many of his pithy lines have become popular proverbs, while his greater

poems are duly appreciated by all who can recognise great if limited genius. Tickell, on the other hand, is chiefly, if not solely, remembered by a single stanza, which it must be confessed is often quoted in complete ignorance of its author's name:—

“I hear a voice you cannot hear,  
That cries, I must not stay;  
I see a hand you cannot see,  
That beckons me away.”

Funeral monuments contain this sorrowful epitaph, graven thereon by those who are quite unconscious of its original context, as part of the last words of the jilted Lucy to her faithless Colin. The whole of the poem, which is a true poem, in which it occurs, has a melancholy ring, recalling the more pathetic passages of Goldsmith, and it is at once more natural and living than much of the verse of its own period.

Tickell did not always woo the sad Melpomene; sometimes he indulged in a rather pompous flirtation with laughing Thalia. His satires, which were the result, are not highly successful; they are too severely savage to be truly satirical. Like certain other obtrusively patriotic southern Britons, he had no love of the Scots; he has left one pitiless attack upon them, in which he gives a taste of his wit in the following easy and graceful couplet:—

And into these tremendous speeches  
Breaks forth the poet *without breeches*.

What that consecrated garment either in its absence or in its twin resplendence has to do with excellence in character or conduct I will leave Tickell to decide, in that abundant leisure which now is his. One of the Genevan versions of the early chapters of “Genesis” regards it as

an "outward and visible sign" of the "Fall of Man." Still it is doubtless serviceable in its place, but not to be used as a taunt to fling in the face of a grave and learned nation, which has adopted it out of condescension to human weakness.

Among the host of masculine minstrels several dainty ladies make their fitful appearance. One of these, who may be taken as an example of the race, is no less a person than Pope's "fair foe" Lady Mary Wortley Montague, to whom the epithet dainty, if report speak truth, is as hazardous as the disparaging word *person*. She contributed a number of more or less prosaic poems, in which her famous wit shines too seldom. Amongst these are five out of six "Town Eclogues," the fourth of which—"The Basset Table"—is from the pungent pen of Pope. Her lines are for the most part clever rather than poetical, though her undoubted cleverness sometimes appears to be straining after an endeavour to live up to her conversational reputation. She has one sublime stanza in "A Cure for the Vapours," addressed to a luckless lady, who could not cease to weep over her departed lover. The advice tendered is a recommendation to indulge in "emotion remembered *with* tranquility," though it is so much to the point and so severely practical as almost to take the breath away:—

All those dismal looks and fretting  
Cannot Damon's life restore;  
Long ago the worms have eat him,  
You can never see him more.

There is more truth than sentiment, more common sense than consolation in this grimly jocose stanza. It might indeed serve as "A Cure for the Vapours," though its fair recipient could hardly be expected to relish the playful allusion to "The Diet of Worms."

Amongst the companions in these pages of the slatternly queen of "*Les Precieuses Ridicules*" is that wandering star Benjamin, grandson of Edward Stillingfleet, once Bishop of Worcester. He is represented by some ponderously sonorous lines on "*Conversation*" enlivened now and then by wit of an elephantine grace. Nine hundred and twenty lines contain many sound rules for the attainment of excellence in the conversational art; but for the most part the lines themselves are so solid as to all but paralyse the energy of the reader, who will do well to follow the rules rather than their manner of expression. They boom forth strenuous declamation with a slow and rumbling rhythm not unlike the sound of the modern steam-roller. Moreover the diligent reader will do wisely to take care, lest, if he treat his authority too seriously, he succeed in attaining the sublime conversational powers of the eminent Mr. Barlow in the immortal "*Sanford and Merton*." Near Stillingfleet "*laid up in lavender*" is Mr. Matthew Green's elaborate and pointed poem on "*The Spleen*," which has much vigour and is worthy of a gentleman who spent his leisure in the cool shades of the Custom House. Now the Green is withered and his "*Spleen*" has ceased to torment him or any other.

The second volume opens with four pretty and poetical "*Eclogues*" on "*The Progress of Love*"\* from the pen of George afterwards Lord Lyttelton. These are musical in their rhythm and far superior in naturalness to most of the "*Pastorals*" of their period. They have, it is true, one cardinal defect in their kind, from which indeed perhaps only Theocritus has been free: while the scenery is thoroughly English, and English of that distinctive character found in the valley of the Thames, the shepherds and

\* First published in folio in 1732. Pope saw, admired and corrected them.



shepherdesses are not merely christened with obsolete Greek names, but their songs abound with a judicious selection of myths from the Greek and Roman fable-land. Truly they must have been highly endowed rustics, who by the light of nature had acquired, what Dr. Lemprière learned at the expense of the labours of half a lifetime. Still some of the lines sound with quite exceptional beauty and warble sweetly in the ear, while most of them indicate that their author was in the "Doubting Castle" of his "Pilgrim's Progress." Once when the smitten Damon wins a faint glimmering of "white-handed hope," the poet sings:—

Pleas'd with this flatt'ring thought the love-sick boy  
Felt the faint dawns of a doubtful joy;  
Back to his flock more cheerful he return'd,  
When now the setting sun less fiercely burn'd;  
Blue vapours rose along the mazy rills,  
And light's last blushes tinged the distant hills.

The foregoing descriptive passage is pretty and natural; the four "Eclogues" abound in such delicate pictures of English rural scenery. As pastorals they are greatly superior to those of Pope, from whose polished couplets they have derived a slightly monotonous yet genuinely melodious music and made it their own.

From the same nimble wit is the following saucily satirical song to Miss Lucy F——\* "On her Pleading Want of Time":—

On Thames's bank a gentle youth  
For Lucy sigh'd with matchless truth,  
Ev'n when he sigh'd in rhyme;  
The lovely maid his flame return'd,  
And would with equal warmth have burn'd,  
But that she had not time.

\* Miss Lucy Fortescue, daughter of Hugh Fortescue, was married to Lyttelton in 1741. He wrote a "Monody" on her death in 1747.

Oft he repair'd with eager feet  
 In secret shade this fair to meet,  
     Beneath th' accustom'd lime;  
 She would have fondly met him there,  
 And heal'd with love each tender care,  
     But that she had not time.

"It was not thus, inconstant maid,  
 You acted once" (the shepherd said),  
     "When love was in its prime."  
 She griev'd to hear him thus complain,  
 And would have writ to ease his pain,  
     But that she had not time.

"How can you act so cold a part?  
 No crime of mine has chang'd your heart,  
     If love be not a crime.  
 We soon must part for months, for years."  
 She would have answer'd with her tears,  
     But that she had not time.

That is a delightful piece of occasional verse, which must at least have arrested the pre-occupied attention of Miss Lucy F——. Did she ever find time to comfort her sighing swain, before she and he retired into the drowsy land of obscurity, in which their anxious hearts are now at rest? Her peculiar excuse reminds me of the case of a learned professor, when his "own familiar friends" were falling victims to wedlock. It was suggested to him, that it was his turn to follow their honourable example. Whereupon his answer was rather characteristic than strictly grammatical and certainly unconsciously funny. "Me get married," he said with wide-opened eyes, "I *haven't time*." It is needless to add, that he did ultimately find time for that "high emprise," and it is pleasant to know that Miss Lucy F—— was no less fortunate.

In the same volume are some pointed epigrams, many of which have been dictated by a very masculine spite against sundry forsaken lady loves. They are all from the pen

of one inconstant swain, who had the temerity to address his former mistress in the following rude but not untruthful terms:—

“ I lov’d thee beautiful and kind,  
And plighted an eternal vow;  
So alter’d are thy face and mind,  
’Twere perjury to love thee now.”

In a second epigram he tries to excuse his own faithlessness by throwing the blame upon the incompatibility of the lady, a habit dating from the beginnings of the race:—

“ My heart still hovering round about you,  
I thought I could not live without you;  
Now we have liv’d three months asunder,  
How I liv’d with you is the wonder.”

In these saucy lines something of Martial’s gall masquerades in an English habit, which is wholesome neither to the writer nor to the theme. Did the author, who wisely veils himself under the discreet anonymity of — Esq.<sup>1</sup> send these ungallant verses to those whom in turn he had loved and left for ever? If he did, it may be that neither lady would be disinclined to anticipate the example of the illustrious Mistress Meg Dods, who threatened her

1. — Esq. would seem to have been Robert Craggs, Earl of Nugent (1702—1788). He was the son of Michael Nugent of Carlanstown, Co. Westmeath. For his second wife he married, March 23rd, 1737, Anne, daughter of James Craggs, Portmarth, General, and sister of James Craggs, Secretary of State, from whom he adopted the name Craggs. His “Ode to Mr. Wm. Pultney,” was published separately in 1739. In the same year Robert Dodsley brought out his “Odes and Epistles.” Some of his contemporaries asserted that the former was too clever to have been written by him, and further asserted that he paid David Malloch or Mallet (1705—1765) to write it. That was probably “a terminological inexactitude” on their part.

opponents with her "ten talents." It is perhaps unnecessary to add, that such *talents* were not of the nature of ancient money, but capable of being buried in the superabundant cheek of the feminine adversaries.

Following this sarcastic and ungallant epigrammatist comes the august William Whitehead, one of George II.'s poet laureates, who contributes a once justly famous and not wholly forgotten song entitled "*Je ne Sçai Quoi*," which contains more points in its four stanzas than a host of modern drawing-room ditties:—

Yes, I'm in love, I feel it now,  
And *Caelia* has undone me;  
And yet I'll swear, I can't tell how  
The pleasing plague stole on me.

'Tis not her face, which love creates,  
For there no graces revel;  
'Tis not her shape, for there the fates  
Have rather been uncivil.

'Tis not her air, for sure in that  
There's nothing more than common;  
And all her sense is only chat,  
Like any other woman.

Her voice, her touch might give th' alarm—  
'Twas both perhaps, or neither;  
In short, 'twas that provoking charm  
Of *Caelia* altogether.

The laureate's conundrums are left for the solution of the more experienced reader of either sex, but the verses themselves have a verve and piquancy of their own, which make them bright and agreeable. Nay, more, they would seem to display a subtle insight into the wondrous vagaries of the tender passion.

Isaac Hawkins Browne, a wit of some compass, cannot fail to excite sympathy or provoke abhorrence by his clever and enthusiastic "Pipe of Tobacco." His blend is of the best, being compounded of parodies of these six poets, to wit Colley Cibber, Ambrose Philips, James Thomson, Edward Young, Alexander Pope and Jonathan Swift. A stronger mixture could hardly be imagined:—Colley Cibber represents "Fine-cut Bristol Bird's-eye"; Ambrose Philips is the counterpart of ærial "Golden Cloud," that faint suggestion of a stronger leaf; James Thomson, the bard of "Indolence," resembles the dreamy power of "Old Judge"; Edward Young, the saintly divine, comes nearest to the flaky fragrance of "Lone Jack"; Alexander Pope is like "Latakia," which has a fine flavour though a sub-acute aroma; while Dean Swift finds his fitting parallel in sound, dark and emetic "Cavendish," if not in that sable roll called after a famous city of his native land. A town tobacconist was once charged with selling, or otherwise offering for sale, as tobacco, that which was not tobacco. "Excuse me, your Worship," he pleaded in his politest tones, "I never called it tobacco, I called it a *smoking mixture*." This by the way; still it must be confessed that our poet's mixture is less deleterious than the tobacconist's blend, though in both cases there is an undoubted flavour of *cabbage*. First come lines, which every faithful disciple of Sir Walter Raleigh will cheerfully endorse:—

Happy mortal he who knows  
Pleasure which a *pipe* bestows;  
Curling eddies climb the room,  
Wafting round a mild perfume.

How true, how sublime! Anti-nicotine League, avaunt!  
An old crusted pipe, the faithful comrade of many days,  
lies before me, the unfailing solace of my solitude. But

*quo ruimur?* The poet continues after a brief space with no less truth than point:—

Blest leaf ! whose aromatic gales dispense  
 To Templars modesty, to parsons sense ;  
 So raptur'd priests, at fam'd Dodona's shrine,  
 Drink inspiration from the steam divine.  
 Poison that cures, a vapour that affords  
 Content, more solid than the smile of lords ;  
 Rest to the weary, to the hungry food,  
 The last kind refuge of the *wise* and *good*.  
 Inspired by thee dull cits adjust the scale  
 Europe's peace, when other statesmen fail.  
 By thee protected, and thy sister beer,  
 Poets rejoice, nor think the bailiff near.  
 Nor less the critic owns thy genial aid,  
 While supperless he plies the piddling trade.  
 What though to love and soft delights a foe,  
 By ladies hated, hated by the beau,  
 Yet social freedom, long to courts unknown,  
 Fair health, fair truth, and virtue are thine own.  
 Come to thy poet, come with healing wings,  
 And let me taste thee unexcised by kings.

On the foregoing, which is in itself sufficiently truthful and explicit, I must be allowed to make one remark. In the third line, Mr. Isaac Hawkins Browne confounds Dodona with Delphi. At the former shrine the will of Zeus was revealed by the murmurings of a breeze through the leaves of an oak, whereas at the latter the seated priestess grew intoxicated with Apollo's smoke, and so made known his oracular purpose. With the rest of the poet's pronouncements I am in full accord and endorse with especial heartiness the last line,

And let me taste thee unexcised by kings.

The third volume opens with a poem by Pope and with several from drowsy James Thomson ; but my business is not with the gods or demi-gods but with the fauns and satyrs of poesy. Amongst the latter a personage named

S. J. Esq., who would seem to have been Soame Jenyns, holds a respectable rank. This caustic satirist has two pungent poems on "The Modern Fine Gentleman" and "The Modern Fine Lady" respectively. The first of these fierce effusions contains the following lines, which with little alteration will apply to the empty dandies of to-day with no less force than to their prototypes in a gaudier age:—

Just broke from school, pert, impudent, and raw;  
 Expert in Latin, more expert in taw,  
 His honour posts o'er Italy and France,  
 Measures St. Peter's dome, and learns to dance.  
 Thence having quick through various countries flown,  
 Glean'd all their follies, and expos'd his own,  
 He back returns, a thing so strange all o'er,  
 As never ages past produc'd before.  
 A monster of such complicated worth  
 As no one single clime could e'er bring forth;  
 Half atheist, papist, gamester, bubble, rook,  
 Half fiddler, coachman, dancer, groom and cook.  
 Next, because bus'ness now is all the vogue,  
 And who'd be quite polite, must be a rogue,  
 In Parliament he purchases a seat,  
 To make th' accomplish'd gentleman complete.  
 There safe in self-sufficient impudence,  
 Without experience, honesty, or sense,  
 Unknowing in her interest, trade, or laws,  
 He vainly undertakes his country's cause.  
 Forth from his lips prepar'd at all to rail,  
 Torrents of nonsense burst like bottled ale,  
 Though shallow, muddy; brisk, though mighty dull;  
 Fierce without strength; o'erflowing though not full.

The last four lines of the foregoing admirable character-sketch are a tolerably close parody of Sir John Denham's address to the Thames in his "Cooper's Hill":—

O, could I flow like thee, and make thy stream  
 My great example, as it is my theme!  
 Though deep, yet clear; though gentle, yet not dull;  
 Strong without rage; without o'erflowing full.

Similarly the lines beginning, "Half atheist, papist," are modelled exactly upon Dryden's immortal description of the second Duke of Buckingham in his "Absalom and Achitophel."

A natural chivalry forbids my quotation from the satire upon "The Modern Fine Lady," whose picture is painted in darker colours still, with that peculiarly low estimation of woman which marked so many of the poets of the eighteenth century.

Passing on to the fourth volume we find that the opening poem is Gray's "Elegy," which lives ever in the heart of those who have once thrilled to its magical sweetness. Waller's ghost has been roused from the Elysian fields to pay its tithe in the shape of some verses to one Doctor Rogers. Collins contributes his immortal dirge upon Fidele of Shakespeare's "Cymbeline," while Doctor Johnson thunders forth his grave moralisings on "The Vanity of Human Wishes." David Garrick leaves the stage awhile to play the part of the man of letters, in which he succeeds passing well. Henry Brooke of the famous "Fool of Quality," sings a few trifling songs. Amongst others the Rev. James Merrick, who sang the "Chameleon," lends his quota of witty verses, half fable and half satire, of which the following will serve as a sufficient example. The poem is entitled "The Monkeys, A Tale."

Whoe'er with curious eye has rang'd  
Thro' Ovid's tales, has seen  
How Jove, incens'd, to monkeys chang'd  
A tribe of worthless men.

Repentant soon, th' offending race  
Intreat the injur'd power,  
To give them back the human face,  
And reason's aid restore.



Jove, sooth'd at length, his ear inclin'd,  
And granted half their prayer ;  
But t' other half he bade the wind  
Disperse in empty air.

Scarce had the thund'rer giv'n the nod  
That shook the vaulted skies,  
With haughtier air the creatures strode,  
And stretch'd their dwindl'd size.

The hair in curls luxuriant now  
Around their temples spread,  
The tail, that whilom hung below,  
Now dangled from the head.

The head remains unchang'd within,  
Nor altered much the face ;  
It still retains the native grin,  
And all its old grimace.

Thus half transform'd and half the same,  
Jove made them take their place,  
(Restoring them their ancient claim)  
Among the human race.

Man with contempt the brute survey'd,  
Nor would a name bestow ;  
But woman lik'd the motley breed,  
And call'd the thing a *beau*.

The worthy divine hit hard, but not too hard, that mongrel *beau*, of whom he saw so many spindle-shanked representatives around him. Moreover, he notes with a shrewd side-blow that kindness which the gentler sex has been known to bestow upon those who are objects of contempt to their fellow-men. James Merrick could tune his harp to higher themes than these. He is further represented by a fine poetical paraphrase of the "Benedicite" and by a sweet and daintily expressed "Ode to Fancy."

In the same volume a sportive and anonymous son of

Apollo presents a lively petition to "The Right Honourable Henry Pelham, Esq." from "The Worshipful Company of Poets and News-writers," which concludes with the following touching complaint:—

Your petitioners therefore most humbly intreat  
 (As the time will allow, and Your Honour thinks meet)  
 That measures be chang'd, and some cause of complaint  
 Be immediately furnish'd to end their restraint;  
 Their credit thereby, and their trade to retrieve,  
 That again they may rail, and the nation believe.  
 Or else, if Your Wisdom shall deem it all one,  
 Now the Parliament's rising, and bus'ness is done,  
 That Your Honour would please, at this dangerous crisis,  
 To take to your bosom a few private vices,  
 By which your petitioners, haply, might thrive,  
 And keep both themselves and contention alive:  
 In compassion, good Sir! give 'em something to say,  
 And Your Honour's petitioners ever shall pray.

Perhaps a subtler piece of flattery was seldom penned by a place-hunting poet, who must have looked forward with comparative assurance to a reward for his unsolicited testimonial to administrative and individual impeccability. The lines are sportive and flowing, though the poet sang with a distinct eye to the main chance, thus resembling the immortal Thomas Tucker of nursery fame, who towards evening tuned his pipe to anticipatory melodies.

The fifth volume contains a large number of Shenstone's poems, some of which are still not unknown; but as the "Bard of the Leasowes," in spite of that "Schoolmistress," in whom he not unnaturally took a bachelor interest, is generally pictured as a *multum-in-parvo* landscape gardener, or as a poet of a serious and saccharine cast, two acid examples of his rhythmical vinegar are herewithal set forth. The first is a severe little satire on "The Extent of Cookery," which deals however, not with victuals but with wigs.

## ALIUS ET IDEM.

When Tom to Cambridge first was sent,  
 A plain brown *bob* he wore;  
 Read much, and look'd as though he meant  
 To be a fop no more.

See him to Lincoln's Inn repair,  
 His resolution flag;  
 He cherishes a length of hair,  
 And tucks *it* in a *bag*.

Nor Coke nor Salkeld he regards,  
 But gets into the House;  
 And soon a Judge's rank rewards  
 His pliant votes and bows.

Adieu! ye *bobs*! ye *bags*, give place!  
*Full-bottoms*, come instead!  
 Good Lord! to see the various ways  
 Of dressing—a *calve's head*!

The slang of the centuries varies with the calve's-heads of each. Hence I may note in passing, that "bobs" are not coins of the realm, neither are "bags" the equivalent of that garment, "which," as Miss Griselda Oldbuck hath it in her mature maidenly modesty, "it would ill become a leddy to particulareeze." Shenstone is merely setting forth the three degrees of comparative dignity as applied to wigs.

The second example recalls one of Dean Swift's wise resolutions concerning his conduct, when he grew old, "Never to give advice to young people! NEVER TO GIVE ADVICE TO YOUNG PEOPLE!!" Shenstone's poem describes with much truth "The Progress of Advice, A Common Case":—

"Suade, nam certum est."

Says Richard to Thomas (and seem'd half afraid):  
 "I am thinking to marry thy mistress's maid;  
 Now because Mistress Martha to thee is well known,  
 I will do 't, if thou bidst me, or let it alone.

Nay, don't make a jest on 't, 'tis no jest to me;  
 For faith I'm in earnest, so prithee be free.  
 I've no fault to find with the girl, since I knew her;  
 But I'd have thy advice, ere I tie myself to her."

Says Thomas to Richard: "To speak my opinion,  
 There's not such a —— in King George's dominion!  
 And I firmly believe, if thou knew'st her, as I do,  
 Thou wouldst choose out a whipping-post first to be tied to.  
 She's peevish, she's thievish, she's ugly, she's old,  
 And a liar, and a fool, and a slut, and a scold."

Next day Richard hastened to church and was wed,  
 And ere night he had told her what Thomas had said.

Alas, why will the unwary give advice in such matters, which they would never think of taking themselves. It is seldom relished, unless it jump with the humour of the petitioner, and it is unfailingly repeated before midnight chimes. I have modestly left a blank in Thomas's description of "Mistress Martha"; the missing word reminds the student of later literature of Hector Macintyre's aposiopesis in his recitation from Ossian. "Son of a what?" queried the Antiquary with indiscreet curiosity. "I believe, Sir," answered Hector, "it means son of a *female dog*." Shensstone was less reticent and proclaims the girl's nature in all its baldness.

But all of the poems of the "Collection" are not of this uncomplimentary kind. In the same volume is to be found, amongst many others from the same graceful pen, an epigram by Sir Charles Hanbury Williams. Its sentiment is unexceptionable and its rhythm sufficiently musical. It is addressed "To a Young Lady, who sent Compliments to a Clergyman upon the Ten of Hearts," and it runs thus:—

Your compliments, dear lady, pray forbear,  
 Old English services were more sincere;  
 You send *ten hearts*, the tithe is only mine,  
 Give me but *one*, and burn the other nine.

That is surely a neat way of making a declaration of the tender passion, which could hardly fail to have pleased the lady, to whom it was sent. It may afford a suggestion in such grave matters to those all too shy men who are content to sigh at a distance without giving their goddess the opportunity of putting them out of their misery.

The sixth and last volume contains many drouthy poems by long since forgotten bards. Still even here now and then a saucy magpie chatters to break the monotony of fuller-toned music. Such a magpie is Doctor Lisle, who has "Imitated from the Spanish, The Power of Music, A Song set to Music by Doctor Hayes":—

When Orpheus went down to the regions below,  
Which men are forbidden to see,  
He tun'd up his lyre, as old histories show,  
To set his Eurydice free.

All hell was astonish'd a person so wise  
Should rashly endanger his life,  
And venture so far,—but how vast their surprise,  
When they heard that he came for his wife!

To find out a punishment due to his fault  
Old Pluto had puzzled his brain,  
But hell had not torments sufficient, he thought,  
So he gave him his wife back again.

But pity succeeding found place in his heart,  
And pleas'd with his playing so well,  
He took her again in reward for his art,  
Such virtue hath music in hell.

I cannot help wondering, in what drawing-room of that by no means squeamish age, such a song could be sung without feminine protest. Doctor Lisle was certainly witty, but perhaps not equally wise in giving this sample of Spanish Juice, which assuredly has a liquorish flavour of its own. He must surely either have been an old bachelor of a non-mellowed type, or possessed of an exceptionally

skittish gray mare in his stable. In any case he would have done well to remember that the proverb "Physician, heal thyself," is a prescription no less applicable to medicine than to divinity.

To make amends for the last sulphurous citation I will quote in full the beautiful song by Thomas Percy, editor, bishop, poet, plagiarist, inventor of excellent though non-existent old poems, yet author and collector, who can give his reader endless delight. It runs thus:—

O Nancy! wilt thou go with me,  
Nor sigh to leave the flaunting town;  
Can silent glens have charms for thee,  
The lowly cot and russet gown?  
No longer dress'd in silken sheen,  
No longer deck'd with jewels rare,  
Say, canst thou quit each courtly scene,  
Where thou wert fairest of the fair?

O Nancy! when thou'rt far away,  
Wilt thou not cast a wish behind?  
Say canst thou face the parching ray,  
Nor shrink before the wintry wind?  
O can that soft and gentle mien  
Extremes of hardship learn to bear,  
Nor sad regret each courtly scene,  
Where thou wert fairest of the fair.

O Nancy! canst thou love so true,  
Through perils keen with me to go,  
Or when thy swain mishap shall rue,  
To share with him the pang of woe?  
Say should disease or pain befall,  
Wilt thou assume the nurse's care,  
Nor wistful those gay scenes recall,  
Where thou wert fairest of the fair?

And when at last thy love shalt die,  
Wilt thou receive his parting breath?  
Wilt thou repress each struggling sigh,  
And cheer with smiles the bed of death?

And wilt thou o'er his breathless clay  
Strew flow'rs, and drop the tender tear,  
Nor *then* regret those scenes so gay,  
Where thou wert fairest of the fair?

The good bishop had read ancient poetry to some purpose; much of the witchery of the old ballad-song lingers in this beautiful poem. It may be that the lover was asking too much, as indeed he seems himself to think with a kind of uneasy consciousness: but he asked in faith, and there is little doubt that he received in fulfilment.

But I must bring this rambling examination to a close, though the temptation to indulge in further quotation is strong. Where much is good, some very good, selection has been difficult. I can only hope to have made Dodsley's "Collection" more living than perhaps it may have been in many minds. Most of the poems cited have contained reminiscent echoes from the stronger poems of the past; but of their grace and wit, their searching severity and occasional gleams of rare beauty there can be no doubt. At all events it is always interesting to make or renew an acquaintance with the reading, in which the men of a former century delighted; nor can it be said that for the most part their taste was less creditable than ours. They could read and enjoy more solid subjects, more solidly treated than the average reader of to-day, whose literary appetite is stimulated by the impudent genius and evanescent ineptitude of men of the George Bernard Shaw type, to say nothing of the marvellous inventiveness of a portion of the daily press. The authors, whom they loved, might not be endowed with the greatest amount of originality; but they at least wrote with strength and some with a light grace of touch, which must of necessity please the readers of any period. Their wit is keen and their lines are rhythmical; excellent examples are to be found in

Dodsley's "Collection," since the old bookseller had a sharp eye for what was good amongst the floating literature of his time. He has preserved much, which might else have died an unnatural death from the carelessness of contemporary mankind. He has included nothing which is absolutely foolish, nothing which is entirely unreadable; thus he has shown a discernment beyond the endowment of most of the collectors of anthologies ancient and modern. His own nice taste rejected mere trash, and he has included so many good things in his "Collection," that selection has been both invidious and embarrassing.

Æsop's rustic wisely said, that "he could not see the wood for trees." So in Dodsley's pages it is not always easy to see the poetry for poets. Giants and gods, demigods and nymphs, fauns and satyrs thread the mazy dance, and sing according to their various capacities. From the nightingale to the sparrow all kinds of the birds of song are represented, and many a twitter sounds sweetly along the groves of the past. Famous and forgotten they move together, a shadowy host, they strike the lyre, they sing their lays and vanish into night. Some remain in the memory like the songs of infancy, while some are already sunk in the land of silence. But I must not, like Odysseus of old, raise more ghosts than I can lay. The "King of many wiles" laid his supernatural visitors with his sword; time with his scythe has done that uncharitable office for most of ours. Yet they are a goodly band of ἀμήνηα κάρηνα—Spiritless spirits. Doubtless the least of them was the oracle of his or her home and circle of admiring friends. The oracle is silent, the grove is cut down, the Delphic priesthood, save a few sons of the mighty, have passed away. If these scattered limbs of verse blended together into one whole can make the earth lie lighter on any who are gone, it is enough, and we with them may subside into silence.





## AN APRIL MORNING.

By DAVID H. LANGTON.

See the dapple gray coursers of the morn  
Beat up the light with their bright silver hoofs,  
And chase it through the sky.

—*John Marston.*

THE dapple gray coursers on this April morning were driven by a gentle south-west wind, which, breathing hope and life to the grass and flowers, swayed the boughs on the tall ash trees, where the rooks were sitting on their nests, and made the opening daffodils bow on their sturdy stalks.

On a morning like the one I speak of, when the white clouds drive swiftly over, alternated with bright breaks of sunshine, lighting up anon the distant hills where Lyme Cage seems to stand as sentinel, anon moving over the meadows, chasing the shadow, which, like a curtain, draws swiftly over field and hedgerow, one thinks of them as symbols of sorrow and joy. Sorrow and pain indeed come like shadows over our souls, but we look upwards and onwards with hope, and think that happiness and joy have been and will be again.

The thrushes, at six o'clock in the morning, have been singing for some time; one calling from the ash tree, another from the edge of the wood, and still another across the little valley. The thrush, or throistle as he is generally

called in Cheshire (from the Saxon Drossle, I presume), is one of the earliest birds at matins, though far from seeming devotional; his song is the most rollicking and cheery of any bird that sings. An old great-aunt of mine, who lived to be nearly one hundred and three years old, and who was not a particular admirer of Mr. Pitt's administration, used to say that the country was going to the dogs. "Why," she said, "the very thrushes are singing about it. They sing, 'We're ruined. We're ruined. We're ruined. Who did it? Who did it? Who did it? Billy Pitt! Billy Pitt! Billy Pitt!'"

I have often watched a thrush and seen him drum on the ground; then suddenly dart at a worm which the vibration of the earth has brought to the surface. Then follows a struggle, often ending in honours being divided, the thrush having to be satisfied with one-half of the worm, while the other half goes sadly away, perhaps musing philosophically about early birds and the folly of early rising, perhaps with the firm resolve to stay in bed in the morning and to grow a new tail as quickly as possible.

Here is Benja Fold, with its old thatch-roofed cottages, with dormer-windows peeping from the straw—one of the quaint old-world pictures which artists love to paint—where, I am told, one family has lived for four hundred years.

On the road to the Hall is Pownall Green, where the hand-loom silk weavers still ply their busy shuttles. I had a chat the other day with one of the weavers, who told me he had been a silk weaver for sixty years. He is now seventy-two years old, hale and hearty, and can still weave from fifty to sixty yards of sarsanet in the week, for which he is paid at the rate of sixpence halfpenny a yard for the broad and fourpence a yard for the narrow pieces.

He told me—for he was very communicative—that the weft came from Italy ready thrown, but that the warp was manufactured at Macclesfield, chiefly from French silk.

“Is it not very tedious and close work?” I asked.

He answered me that it was not, and his daughter, who works at another loom in the same room, said: “You see, we can read or talk while at work.”

I was much struck with this, and queried: “But suppose a thread breaks, how do you manage to see it when you are reading?”

“I can tell, without looking, whenever anything goes wrong?”

“And how do you manage the piecing up? You want very good eyes for that, don’t you? the threads are so very fine.”

“Oh! I am so used to it, I can piece-up without looking at the threads.”

The old man’s wife was winding the silk on to the bobbins for the shuttle from a large reel by the aid of a spinning-wheel. They told me that they could remember the time when there were over one hundred weavers at work in Bramhall. There were over forty at Pownall Green—where there are now only seven—thirteen in Benja Fold and many more in Ack Lane, on the Moss, and at Woodford. Alas! where are they all now? As Browning says:—

Swift as a weaver’s shuttle fleet our years;  
Man goeth to the grave, and where is he?

The old man told me that the goods he wove could not be made on a power-loom. He said that it had been tried with several looms driven by power, but the looms pulled the work to pieces. Of the truth of this I have no means of judging. The silk is finished by a man at Woodford.

The old woman described the process as being done on a great drum in front of a fire, and that it took about an hour and a half to finish a piece of one hundred yards.

There is the mellow, flute-like voice of the blackbird :—

The ousel-cock, so black of hue,  
With orange-tawney bill,

as Bottom, the weaver, sang. He sits on a branch of the old oak-tree, in his glossy black coat, a contrast to his more soberly-clad mate, who, as she sits on her eggs in a cunningly-concealed nest, with her brownish back and speckled breast, might easily be taken for a thrush.

One of the finest things in country life, to me, is to see and hear a blackbird sing as he flies. Twice have I had that pleasure, and am always on the watch in spring to see and hear again.

A terrible thief is the blackbird, but we forgive him much for his song. He takes my cherries—not a few, but all of them—and he bites deep into scores of apples and pears. Yet, when he and his mate build in holly-bush or thorn-tree, I have not the heart to take the eggs or destroy the young.

At one place, down in the grass by a pond, a thick cluster of daffodils are blooming, looking like beautiful stars in an emerald sky. Daffodils, to my thinking, never look so much at home as when growing naturally in the grass of an orchard or meadow, where no spade ever goes to disturb them. They look well too, growing in the grassy bank of a hedge-row. Robert Herrick must have seen them often in such a position, and one of the sweetest things he wrote was “To Daffodils” :—

Fair daffodils, we weep to see  
You haste away so soon ;  
As yet the early-rising sun  
Has not attained its noon.

Stay, stay,  
Until the hasting day  
Has run  
But to the even-song;  
Then, having prayed together, we  
Will go with you along.

Close by the gates of Bramhall Park are the stocks, where the evildoers of Bramhall have sat in past days "in durance vile." Here is a road going in the direction of Hazel Grove, or Bullock Smithy, as it used to be called. This curious name used to puzzle me, but I have seen a copy of an indenture which has enlightened me. The deed conveyed a plot of land to Richard Bullock, of Torkenton, blacksmith, and is dated the first of May, in the second year of our Lady Elizabeth (1560). So the place got the name of Bullock's Smithy.

Bramhall Hall, on this April morning, is a dream of beauty, with its terraces and black and white front, overlooking the little valley of the Lady Brook, with a view of the Derbyshire hills in the distance.

Standing on the little bridge spanning the little stream, which here joins the Lady Brook, close to the Hall, I think of the changes the Hall must have gone through since it was first built. It must have been a place of considerable size as far back as 1644, for in some memoranda of William Davenport, a former owner, is written that on May 28th, 1644, was quartered at Bramhall Hall a party of horse to the number of sixty, belonging to the Duke of Newcastle's forces, then lying between Lyme and Stockport, besides a number of officers, among whom are mentioned Lieutenant-Colonel Sir Symon Fanshawe, Major Maxe, Colonel Daniel, Lieutenant-Colonel Hungate, Captain Meltam, Captain Thomas, Lieutenant Pendred and Cornet Trotter. Two troops had also been quartered there on

the 26th, "At whose remove," Davenport says quaintly, "I lost three horses." When the second party left he lost three more horses, and although in a letter from Captain Stanley—who seems to have been scouring the country commandeering horses—the Captain says that the injury had been done without his knowledge and consent, yet on June 8th Captain Stanley's Cornet, with a party of horse, took away all the horses in the park, to the number of seventeen, leaving poor Will without a horse to ride. He seems to have felt the loss of his horses a deal more than the subsequent fine that the Parliament put upon him for what they called his "delinquency or offences against the Parliament," though from his memoranda he seems to have taken no active part on either side, being then about fifty-eight years old, and wanted only to be let alone. The Hall, being an important place, was occupied several times by both sides in the struggle between the King and his subjects.

Hark! there is the cuckoo.

The German poet Gellert has given us the reason why the cuckoo always sings the same thing. He says the cuckoo, speaking to a starling which had come out of the town said:—

"What do they say in the town about our singing? What do they say of the nightingale?"

"The whole town loves her song," answered the starling.

"And what of the lark?" said the cuckoo.

"Half the town praises her sweet voice."

"And what of the blackbird?" continued the cuckoo.

"Well! here and there one praises him too," said the starling.

"I must still ask you something else," said the cuckoo.

"What do they say about me?"

"Oh!" said the starling, "I don't know what to say, for no one speaks about you."

"Well then I'll be revenged on the unthankful people and everlastingly speak about myself."

The little wood down by the brook will soon have a carpet of wild hyacinths, and, as Richard Jefferies says in "Life of the Fields":—

There is so much for us yet to come,  
So much to be gathered and enjoyed.

My heart is fixed firm and stable in the belief that ultimately the sunshine and the summer, the flowers and the azure sky shall become, as it were, interwoven into man's existence. We shall take from all their beauty and enjoy their glory. Pain and sorrow flow over us with little ceasing, as the sea-hoofs beat on the beach. Let us not look at ourselves, but onwards, and take strength from the leaf and the signs of the field.





## SOME COMMENTS ON STERNE.

By JOHN MORTIMER.

TO a remark dropped by Sir William Bailey at the Christmas supper of the Manchester Literary Club this short communication owes its genesis. In the course of a speech, which in its fulness and variety reminded one of the deliverances of Praed's "Vicar," the worthy knight, referring to the Literary and Philosophical Society, of which he has the honour to be President, told us that among its members it had counted Dr. Ferriar, who had distinguished himself in a literary sense, by drawing attention to the plagiarisms of the Rev. Laurence Sterne, and especially in connection with "Tristram Shandy." To the present writer this incidental allusion was as interesting as it was unexpected, inasmuch as it reminded him that among the neglected volumes on the shelves of his library there was a ragged veteran in grey and marbled boards which styled itself "Illustrations of Sterne: with other Essays and Verses," by John Ferriar, M.D., published in 1798, and printed for Cadell and Davies, London, by George Nicholson, Manchester. Of that book and its author it must be confessed that his acquaintance had hitherto been of the slightest or most superficial kind; as far as any real knowledge of it was concerned it had practically remained unused. Now, however, that an authoritative and index finger had, as it were, been pointed toward



it, a closer scrutiny must needs be made, and that without further delay. The reward has been adequate; old associations have been pleasantly revived, and a new and interesting acquaintance in authorship has been made.

My acquaintance with Sterne dates a very long way back; a faded copy of his "Sentimental Journey," purchased on a Saturday night, at a second-hand book stall, presided over by one Battle, in Shudehill Market, seems, in my dim memory, to form, as it were, the nucleus of my library, to be, if not the first, among the earliest of my acquisitions in that direction. It would not be quite safe to say how as an author he influenced me at that time, for I might be confusing later impressions with earlier ones, but, unless I am the victim of some self-deception, I am inclined to risk the statement that my mental attitude towards him, in the face of a longer and more intimate knowledge, has remained unchanged. To begin with the "Sentimental Journey" was to read Sterne backwards, but that mattered little, the Ethiopian had not changed his skin since he wrote "Tristram Shandy." Upon these two books you may form his literary estimate, for he is an author whose works lie within a narrow compass, and when you have added some sermons and letters you have got the whole of his legacy. I am not here attempting a literary estimate, that is not to my purpose, but one may say that from one's earliest introduction to Sterne there was the sense of being brought into contact with an undoubted humourist of strange and peculiar qualities, a humourist whose personality pervaded all that he wrote. Moreover he was a jester who wore the clerical garb, and who in his efforts to amuse you did not cease to sermonise. The portrait I have of him, prefixed to his works, shows him wearing a preacher's gown, the head is clothed with a periwig, the features are somewhat delicately formed, with twink-

ling eyes, and lines of humour about the mouth, a Shandean face, as someone has described it, with "the nose shaped like an ace of spades." In my gallery of literary portraits that face has always interested me deeply, but I have never come to regard it with anything like affection. You who are familiar with "Tristram Shandy" and the "Sentimental Journey" know how much real humour is contained therein, how much beautiful writing of the tender and pathetic kind, but at the same time you would not fail to recognise how much there is of false sentiment, and what a lamentable disposition there is to find material for laughter in a dalliance with things that lie on the other side of virtue. I don't know a writer who has summed up Sterne more accurately than Thackeray, and this is the way he expresses himself:—

"A perilous trade, indeed, is that of a man who has to bring his tears and laughter, his recollections, his personal griefs and joys, his private thoughts and feelings to market, to write these on paper and sell them for money. Does he exaggerate his grief, so as to get his reader's pity for a false sensibility? feign indignation so as to establish a character for virtue? elaborate repartees so that he may pass for a wit? steal from other authors, and put down the thought to the credit side of his own reputation for ingenuity and learning? feign originality? affect benevolence or misanthropy? appeal to the gallery gods with claptrap and vulgar boasts to catch applause? . . . How much was deliberate calculation and imposture—how much was false sensibility—and how much true feeling? Where did the lie begin, and did he know where? and where did the truth end in the art and scheme of this man of genius, this actor, this quack? . . . The humour of Swift and Rabelais, whom he pretended to succeed, poured from them as naturally as song does from

a bird; they lose no manly dignity with it, but laugh their hearty great laugh out of their broad chests as nature bade them. But this man—who can make you laugh, who can make you cry too—never lets his reader alone, or will permit his audience repose; when you are quiet, he fancies he must rouse you, and turns over head and heels, or sidles up and whispers a nasty story. The man is a great jester, not a great humourist. He goes to work systematically and of cold blood, paints his face, puts on his ruff and motley clothes, and lays down his carpet and tumbles on it."

Nevertheless, as I have said, Sterne is for me a very interesting figure, and I remember how this interest led me, many years ago, to make a pilgrimage to Coxwold. Turning to the record of that journey, I find that I have described the village as straggling along rising ground, and on each side of a broad street. "A sweet retirement," Sterne truthfully called it. It is situate in a rich valley, lying on the near slopes of the Hambleton Hills, which stretch away above it in tracts of heathery moorland, broken by cliffs of grey limestone. "'Tis a land of plenty," writes Sterne; "I sit down alone to venison, fish and wild fowl, or a couple of fowls or ducks, with curds and strawberries and cream, and all the ample plenty which a rich valley under Hambleton Hills can produce." The houses seem to remain pretty much as they did in Sterne's day, some of them quaint and many-gabled, and for the most part roofed with red tiles. In the centre of the street is a mighty elm that casts its branches to the houses on each side, lending a noble shade and rest beneath its umbrageous foliage. A little beyond the elm, on the left, is the old church, a fine building in the perpendicular style with embattled walls, from which project antique gargoyles, and an embattled tower with an ancient vane. The door of the church through which I entered opened

into the chancel, which is filled with monuments of the Belasque and Fauconberg families. But of more interest was the old pulpit, from which Sterne was wont to astound his village auditors with those queer sermons, full of brilliant thought and sparkling now and then with the Shandean humour. In imagination one could fill the old high-backed oaken pews with their occupants and the pulpit with that tall eccentric figure leaning over it, who, in his discourse, seemed, as Gray says, to be "often tottering on the verge of laughter, and ready to throw his periwig in the face of his audience."

Passing out of the church and along the road, at a little distance just outside the village, one comes upon "Shandy Hall," which was once Sterne's parsonage. It is a quaintly-gabled, red-tiled, brick-chimneyed building, long and low, with ivy on the walls and trees about it. From such glimpses of the interior as one could get through the open windows the rooms seemed to be low-ceiled and cosy. Here, at intervals, he wrote "Tristram Shandy," shaping out the characters of Uncle Toby, the Widow Wadman, and Corporal Trim. From here he took his flight to London, to plunge into fashionable follies, where, as Garrick says, "he degenerated like an ill-transplanted shrub; the incense of the great spoiled his head, as their ragouts had done his stomach." From hence, too, he started on his Sentimental Journey through France and Italy. And here he returned after his dissipation, broken in health, finding in the quiet pastoral solitude a resting-place after his wild Bohemian life. But only for a time. He owned he might have been happy here if he had not, "what was worst of all, a disquieted heart to reason with." Writing to his friend Eugenius, he said: "I should be a marvellously happy man but for some reflections which bow down my spirits." He leaves it for the last time, and

goes to London, to die lonely and friendless in his lodging, with none but hirelings about him. "Alas! poor Yorick! Where be your gibes now, your gambols, your songs, your flashes of merriment that were wont to set the table on a roar?"

But it is time to end this too lengthy prologue, and come to my more immediate subject. Dr. John Ferriar, the author of the "Illustrations of Sterne," now lying before me, was born at Oxnam, Roxburghshire, on November 21st, 1761. In 1785 he came to Manchester, and remained here until the time of his death, which occurred thirty years later. He lived for a time in St. James's Square, but his book is dated from a later residence in Dawson Street, which, we are told, was the name then given to that part of the present Mosley Street which lies between Booth Street and St. Peter's Church. In the year following his advent in Manchester he became a member of the Literary and Philosophical Society, and being both a physician and a scholar, with qualifications for authorship in both directions, he found in that Institution a very congenial arena for the exercise and display of his powers. He seems to have been a very active and distinguished member, who not only contributed freely to the Society's Transactions on literary and philosophical subjects, but acted as one of its Secretaries for four years, and for four years held the office of Vice-President. As a physician he attained considerable eminence, and entered largely into public work in matters connected with his profession, becoming in 1790 one of the Honorary Physicians to the Infirmary. In Dr. Brockbank's valuable sketches of the lives and work of the Honorary Medical Staff of that institution, he finds a conspicuous place, and the record of his work in fighting with infectious diseases among the poor, and his efforts to

ameliorate the conditions which led to so much sickness among them, are praiseworthy in the highest degree. On the personal side, though there are hints, thrown out by Dr. Angus Smith, of the existence of a vein of professional jealousy in his nature, it is interesting to read of him in another direction, that "He was especially distinguished by strength and rectitude of understanding, by manners somewhat unbending and severe, by a high sense of honour, and by a fearless and dignified moral bearing"; and yet again, that "he was a warm and steady friend, and a tender and indulgent parent." Those who desire a fuller knowledge of Dr. Ferriar, perhaps the fullest obtainable, will find it in "The Palatine Note-Book" for 1882, edited by John Eglington Bailey.

Whether Dr. Ferriar regarded his literary studies and pursuits as part of the serious occupation of his life or something that tended to its recreation, there can be no doubt that, between his claims to our regard as an author or a physician, the honours are pretty equally divided. He gathered about him a library of books, many of them rare and obscure, and in various languages, ancient and modern, which he dealt with as a painstaking student. It was from these sources, and especially from French literature, that he drew largely in dealing with Sterne. He could express himself cleverly and humorously in verse, finding, as in his "Puppet Show," no difficulty in Latin as an alternative medium. He was also a student of dramatic literature, and one of his earliest and ablest efforts was an essay on the dramatic writings of Massinger. In the book under notice there are essays both in prose and verse, and it may perhaps be allowed, by way of digression, to refer to a philosophical discourse on "Genius," contained therein, regarding which a good story is told by Dr. Brockbank, on the authority of Robert Owen, who went to

the Literary Society to hear it read, taking with him Dr. Dalton as his guest. In the paper the author, anticipating the more modern dictum that genius may be best described as a capacity for taking pains, maintained that "if a person of unassisted good sense were to enquire what constitutes a man of genius, he would discover it to be a vigorous and successful exertion of the mind on some particular subject, or a general alacrity and facility of intellectual labour. In a word, that genius consists in the power of doing best what many endeavour to do well." When the paper had been read no one rose to discuss it. Owen wanted Dalton to hear a discussion, so he rose to say that he "had always had a great desire to be a genius, and had always been very industrious in his application for the purpose, but could never succeed. He thought therefore that there must be some error in the learned author's theory. Dr. Ferriar rose to reply. 'He blustered or became so red with suppressed feeling as to attract the attention of the members, and merely stammered out some confused reply, when, to relieve his embarrassment, some members began to speak, and a discussion followed.' But from that night Ferriar was never so friendly to Owen as he used to be previously."

Dr. Ferriar, in dealing with Parson Yorick, styled his first paper "Comments on Sterne." When, afterwards, he found the subject grow under his hands, and produced a more comprehensive essay, he published it under the title "Illustrations of Sterne." This description is noteworthy, for, though the result of the essayist's investigations went to prove that Sterne was a plagiarist on a very large scale, there was an evident indisposition to put matters in that light. The writer in "The Palatine Note Book" takes this view of the case, expressing the opinion that "it was Ferriar's intention rather to illustrate his author than

convict him of plagiarism." The fact seems to be that Ferriar had a strong liking for Sterne, in spite of all his defects, and shrunk from posing as a literary detective in tracing the sources of a great deal of his humour in "Tristram Shandy." At the very outset he thus disclaims, in verse, any intention of detraction:—

Sterne, for whose sake I plod through miry ways,  
Of antic wit, and quibbling mazes drear,  
Let not thy shade malignant censure fear,  
Tho' aught of borrowed mirth my search betrays.  
Long slept that mirth in dust of ancient days  
(Erewhile to *Guise* or wanton *Valois* dear),  
Till wak'd by thee in *Skelton's* joyous pile,  
She flung on Tristram her capricious rays;  
But the quick tear, that checks our wond'ring smile,  
In sudden pause, or unexpected story,  
Owns thy true mast'ry; and *Le Fevre's* woes,  
*Maria's* wand'rings, and the *Pris'ner's* throes  
Fix thee conspicuous on the shrine of glory.

I had intended to deal in an illustrative way with Dr. Ferriar's illustrations, but at this stage I find that I am outrunning the limits of my space. It must suffice, therefore, to give an extract or two from his essay showing its trend and purpose. In his introductory pages he says: "When the first volume of 'Tristram Shandy' appeared, they excited almost as much perplexity as admiration. The feeling, the wit, and reading which they displayed were sufficiently relished, but the wild digressions, the abruptness of its narratives and discussions, and the perpetual recurrence to obsolete notions of philosophy, gave them more the air of a collection of fragments, than of a regular work. Most of the writers from whom Sterne drew the general ideas, and many of the peculiarities of his books, were then forgotten, Rabelais was the only French wit of the sixteenth century who was generally



read, and from his obscurity it would have been vain to have expected any illustration of a modern writer." Then he tells us how Sterne "had read with avidity the ludicrous writers who flourished under the last periods of the race of Valois, and the first of the Bourbons. . . . While he was tempted to imitate their productions, the dormant reputation of most of these authors seemed to invite him to a secret treasure of learning, wit and ridicule. To the facility of these acquisitions we probably owe much of the gaiety of Sterne . . . It may even be suspected that by this influence he was drawn aside from his natural bias to the pathetic; for in the serious parts of his works, he seems to have depended on his own force, and to have found in his own mind whatever he wished to produce; but in the ludicrous he is generally a copyist, and sometimes follows his original so closely, that he forgets the changes of manners which give an appearance of extravagance to what was once correct ridicule." Then does Ferriar take us to these French authors indicating the sources of inspiration and plagiarism with most convincing proofs. But it is when he comes near home, and shows us, in lengthened detail, how largely Sterne drew upon Burton "that fantastic old great man," as Lamb styles him, and cribbed in a wholesale and verbatim way from his "Anatomy of Melancholy," that our interest is quickened. He shows us how the first four chapters of "Tristram Shandy" are founded on some passages in Burton, and gives us chapter and verse in proof. He is convinced that Sterne got his idea of Mr. Shandy from the Anatomist, indeed that the character is "a personification of the authorship of Burton." Parson Yorick, too, seems to have been largely indebted to the "Contemplations" of Bishop Hall in the construction of his sermons. "There is a delicacy of thought, and tenderness of expression in the good Bishop's compositions from the

transfusion of which," says Ferriar, "Sterne looked for immortality."

When our author has finished his illustrations he ventures to express the hope that if his reader's opinion of Sterne's learning and originality has been lessened he may still retain "some admiration for the dexterous way in which he has used his borrowed materials." He says: "It was evidently Sterne's purpose to make a pleasant, saleable book, *coûte que coûte*, and after taking his general plan from some of the old French writers, and from Burton, he made prize of all the good thoughts that came in his way." Sterne essayed to sit in Rabelais' easy chair; regarding the difference between the two, Ferriar says there is this great distinction, "Rabelais derided absurdities then existing in full force, and intermingled much sterling sense with the grossest parts of his book; Sterne, on the contrary, laughs at many exploded opinions and forsaken fooleries, and contrives to degrade some of his most solemn passages with a vicious levity." In the expression of that literary judgment Ferriar and Thackeray seem to come together.





R. B. CUNNINGHAME GRAHAM.

By WILLIAM BAGSHAW.

ON Sunday, November 13th, 1887, Trafalgar Square, London, was occupied by a large crowd of people and a body of police numbering some 2,000 strong. The police had been strategically disposed by Sir Charles Warren, in order to hold the square against various processions which were converging on it by different routes to hold a public meeting of protest against the treatment by the Government of an Irish politician: treatment which had culminated in the filching of the gentleman's trousers. Various Radical Clubs and Socialist Societies had organised the processions; but the Government, backed by the *Times*, had forbidden the holding of the meeting.

According to the *Times* the meeting could only result in red ruin and the breaking up of laws, and it attacked the venerable Liberal leader, then in opposition, whose senile passion for power, it said, had encouraged lawlessness here and in the sister isle. The crowd of sightseers in the square was kept moving by the mounted police, and omnibuses made special journeys to give their occupants views of the fun from their roofs. Near by the Guards, with fixed bayonets, and the Horse Guards at Whitehall, in all the panoply of breast-plates and helmets, had their chargers saddled, in order to issue forth promptly at the

first notice. About 4 o'clock in the afternoon the processions began to arrive, and at every entrance they were stopped by the police. Short rushes and scuffles ensued, the police used their staves, and at last soldiers, horse and foot, were called out to help in the clearing of the square.

At the Strand entrance of the square a small knot of men was seen in consultation; then two of their number rushed across the road and made for the police who were blocking the way. One was a sturdy, thick-set man with beard and bushy eyebrows, the other was of slighter build, with dark flashing eyes, pointed beard and moustache, and something, indeed, of a foreign look. He carried his hat in his hand. Turning to those behind he shouted, "Now for the square." The police stepped forward to meet them, and there were cries from the blue-coated ranks of "Break his blank head, I know him." A scuffle took place, the thick-set man is said to have struck out furiously right and left at the police (though on this point witnesses differ—according to their politics). His companion was struck about the head with truncheons, and, bleeding and dishevelled, they were dragged into the middle of the square, formally arrested, and conveyed to the police station. They passed the night in the cells before a charge was preferred against them, though bail was ready; but at last they were released, worn and battered. Surety was found by the Rev. Stewart Headlam for the sturdy prisoner who gave his name as John Burns and who to-day is President of the Local Government Board.

Mr. Haldane, M.P., then a frequenter of the Fabian Society, to-day His Majesty's Secretary of State for War, bailed out the foreign looking gentleman with the bleeding head who was R. B. Cunninghame Graham, the subject of this paper. He is introduced to you thus because his conduct on that famous "Bloody Sunday" is

typical of his attitude towards our modern civilization. He boldly assails it almost single-handed, careless and scornful of consequences.

Mr. Graham is a Scotsman; he was born in 1852, educated at Harrow, and he has led an adventurous and stirring life. In 1886, when not much over thirty years old, he was elected to represent the miners of North Lanarkshire in Parliament. He told the House of Commons, "I come not from the merchant's office or the lawyer's court, but straight from the prairies of America where want is unknown, so that the sight of such misery as exists in London was brought to my mind with exceptional force."

Needless to say, he was a most turbulent and unpromising representative of the working classes. The Labour movement had not the position and power it holds to-day. But Mr. Graham set himself to worry the Government for returns of inquests of deaths by starvation, statistics of men out of employment, numbers of prostitutes in the streets of London, and other ugly facts of our civilization which the average M.P. does not care to discuss. He had constant duels with Mr. Ritchie and Mr. Matthews, the Home Secretary; he fought for an eight hours bill and was supported by Lord Randolph Churchill. He told a House consisting largely of employers of labour "I plead on behalf of those who provide us with our hats, our hosen, our food, and even our seats in Parliament that we may adopt the principle of restricting the hours of labour by international agreement." Seventeen years ago he prophesied "the future belongs to those who have a policy on the economical development of the working classes."

It was on the subject of the sweated chain-makers of Cradley Heath that he was suspended. A blocking motion had been put down to prevent discussion and Mr. Graham

described it in the House as a dishonourable trick. The Speaker requested him to withdraw the expression. "I never withdraw, I simply said what I mean," he replied. After two more requests from the Speaker he still refused, and he was asked to withdraw from the House. "Certainly, Sir, I will go to Cradley Heath," was the answer.

Mr. Graham was not in Parliament after 1892. Indeed he impresses one as not cut out for a Parliamentary career. His sympathies are more with the revolutionary type. Action suits him best. He writes scornfully of those who think "everlasting talk is the best way to revolutionize the world." He says, "When we consider how many conventions would have to be broken to superinduce the coming of Christ's kingdom upon earth, it is easily understood that the easiest way is to break them all at once. Moreover, Christ himself to the Philistines and the vast majority of the Publicans (for one righteous Publican does not make a heaven) must have appeared as a breaker of all laws." The only record of his Parliamentary days in his writings is a vivid portrait of Parnell during the stormy scenes of the eighties.

The desire of the explorer to see something hidden sent Mr. Graham to Morocco in 1897, with the intention of visiting Tarudant, an inaccessible city in the neighbourhood of the Atlas Mountains. The story of his journey is told in *Mogreb-el-Acksa*, published in 1898.

The book is dedicated to Haj Mohammed es Swani, a Moor of the Riff pirate breed, with whom the author had made several journeys in Morocco. The dedication runs, "not that he will ever read it, but because we have travelled much together, and far, and it must have been at times a sore temptation to him, in lonely places, not to assure himself of Paradise by 'nobbling' an unbeliever." This is the only book devoted entirely to his own adven-

tures and the preface is addressed to "Wayfaring men, travellers in this travelling world."

The description of the journey is interwoven with racy anecdotes, fragments of history, startling comparisons in morality and theology, making the book one of the most unconventional and philosophical tales of travel it has been my lot to read. Travelling, to be really pleasurable, must have a certain amount of hardship. More pleasure is derived from even a modest walking tour, if not too carefully mapped out, than the pre-arranged holiday. Of course, as age advances and capability for pleasure narrows, it is easy to confuse comfort with pleasure; but anyone who likes the excitement of arduous mountaineering, or the toil of a long tramp over wet bog and misty moorland with uncertainty as to where the night may be spent, will find an almost envious pleasure in reading the journey to Tarudant.

Mr. Graham started in October, 1897, from Tangiers accompanied by a Syrian gentleman who acted as interpreter, and the Moor already mentioned. Reaching Mogador by steamer he assumed the Moorish dress, and in the character of a travelling Sherif, or holy man, set out with his companions and a muleteer, for Tarudant. He had a little tent just large enough to hold himself and the Syrian, packed on a mule. The other two slept by their mules in the Moorish fashion. Cooking utensils were a kettle and an iron pot, no forks or spoons, as they ate Moorish style with their hands, brass tray, German-pewter tea pot, and six small glasses to hold green tea flavoured with mint and made as sweet as syrup.

Mr. Graham describes the country through which they passed, its soil, vegetation, and people, and in one place he is led to consider whether, in his own words, "if all the world were regulated by a duly elected County Council,

all chosen from a properly qualified and democratic, well-educated, pious electorate, and all men went about minding each other's business—with fornication, covetousness, evil concupiscence, adultery and murder quite unknown, and only slander and a little cheating left to give zest to life—they would be happier upon the whole than are the unregenerate Moors, who lie and steal, fight, fornicate, and generally behave themselves as if blood circulated in their veins and not sour whey."

The difficult subject of missionary work brings out some decided views. According to Mr. Graham all Arabs believe that Christians are influenced in all they do by money. He admits that missionaries by self-denying lives and doctoring do some good; but he contends that the same life lived at home among the savages of East London and Glasgow would be better spent. He defies the missionaries to shew how many converts they have made in the last twenty years. And then taking higher ground for his opinions he says, "The decoying of God-fearing men out of the ranks of the religion they were born in, is a most thorny question in every country like Morocco where the religion of the land is one to which the people are attached." The last sentence has a double edge and implies that we are not a religious people.

At times the travellers lunch under a tree by the wayside, but to smoke a cigarette they have to retire behind a bush; for it is an offence to drink the shameful in the face of true believers. Mr. Graham explained in a footnote that "drinking the shameful is smoking tobacco, not drinking new whisky as in some civilised lands." Swani, the Moor, to whom the book is dedicated, is an interesting character. He had been a double pilgrimage to Mecca, and he was most anxious to persuade Mr. Graham to go. Though unable to read or write Mr. Graham says, "he can talk for hours



upon the attributes of God and as judiciously as he had been a graduate of St. Bees."

When well on their way they came suddenly into the middle of a crowded country market and were obliged to ride through about two thousand people without exciting suspicion. But so majestically did Mr. Graham ride that the poor kissed the hem of his cloak and were heard to mutter, "That Sherif is very proud for one so thin," fat being among the Moors a sign of wealth. His companion Mohammed was so pleased with his deportment as a holy man, that he assured Mr. Graham he was a born Sherif and if he could but speak Arabic better they might make money on the journey, as it is the custom of these holy Sherifs whilst giving coppers to the poor, to cadge from the better classes.

Mr. Graham's keen eye noticed everything on the journey and from a seemingly inexhaustible fountain of reading and experience his comments flow forth. They sight a ruined palace with a stirring history. The Caid who occupied it had oppressed the people beyond endurance; at last twelve thousand of them stormed the palace and tore down its walls to search for money. The Caid had not hidden his money in the walls as is usual in Morocco, but had sent it all to Mogador. He fought to the last, then cutting his women's throats, mounted his favourite horse and cut his way through the enemy; leaving his food stores well doctored with arsenic for the benefit of the conquerors. "And yet," says Mr. Graham, "these Eastern scoundrels have finer faces than any Nonconformist cabinet minister. The Oriental, serene, not a wrinkle, the cabinet minister, lined, puckers round the mouth, a face in which you see all natural passion stultified, and greed and piety, the two most potent factors in his life, writ large and manifest."

Mr. Graham is a masterly horseman, he seems to know every kind of mount in Europe, Africa, and America. In this book he gives dissertations on breeds of horses, modes of mounting and riding, shapes of saddles and other equestrian lore. Judge then his feelings when the horse he had bought at the beginning of his journey developed a swollen shoulder which quite unfitted it for riding. The reason why a Christian had been allowed to buy it so cheaply began to dawn on him. He succeeded in selling the horse and purchasing another, and they continued their "peaceful penetration."

As the party toiled through the mountains signs of famine were visible on every hand. Drought had rendered the country almost a desert and the people were reduced to dig for earth nuts. Then comes one of those sharp, pregnant contrasts which make the book bite and which, if they call forth your antagonism, yet throw a new light on the subject, show it from a new point of view, and are worth all the platitudinous padding that fills so many jerry-made books by skin-deep globe-trotters. Mr. Graham says,

I found myself trying to estimate which of them entailed most misery upon mankind,—the old-time famine, which I saw going on all around me in Morocco, caused by want of water and failure of the crops, or the artificial, modern and economic famine so familiar in all large towns, where in the West End the rich die from a plethora of food, and in the East End the poor exist just at subsistence limit by continual work. No doubt in modern towns the poor enjoy the doubtful blessing of improved sanitation, gas and impure water, laid on in insufficient quantities to every house; of education, that is, illusory instruction to the fifth standard, to fit them to drive carts and tend machines; but, on the other hand, they have but little sun—either external or internal—in their lives, and know their misery by the help of the education which they pay for through the rates.

When he had been travelling about eight days and reached the heart of the mountains he was stopped at the last guard-house by order of the Caid who had been informed that a Christian disguised in Moorish dress was journeying to Sus.

The party was detained some days and had to spend the time in a small tent camped outside the castle of the Caid. They were allowed liberty to roam about the neighbourhood, and Mr. Graham seems to have enjoyed the experience save for the uncertainty of their fate. He watched the youths play football, or strolled along the river bank enjoying the magnificent prospect of the Atlas mountains; at other times he sat listening to the reading of Arab poetry. After the detention had lasted twelve days they were sent back by order of the Sultan, to whom the Caid had sent for instructions. Though he failed to reach Tarudant Mr. Graham penetrated into the heart of the country, talked with Caids, Sheiks, and wandering tribesmen; and had seen the life of the East, still almost unchanged for centuries, pass before his eyes in that distant mountain fastness.

As a plea for the Moors the book is unequalled. It defends their ancient usages not passively, but by attacking the modernity of the West. It stands high like some tall minaret from which Mr. Graham as muezzin makes his cry, trying to pierce the ears of Englishmen so long embedded in what he calls "the putty of their prejudice."

His next considerable work was published in 1901. It is styled "A Vanished Arcadia, being some account of the Jesuits in Paraguay, 1607 to 1767."

Whilst wandering about South America thirty years ago Mr. Graham came across the deserted Jesuit Missions. There he met aged Indians who cherished all the customs left by the company and who repeated to him stories they

had heard in youth about the missions. They believed that in the Jesuits' time the settlements had been a paradise. These facts and his Spanish predilections led Mr. Graham to attempt his history of the lost cause. In addition to his own researches Mr. Graham has founded his work on many authorities, mostly Spanish. A famous historian, Bishop of Oxford, once said, "There are two sides to everything, except Reading Station"; there are certainly two sides to this question of the Jesuit settlements. Mr. Graham has read widely of both; and he lays particular stress on the account written by a German Jesuit, Father Dobrizhoffer, of which an English translation appeared in 1822. Though the reader may be unacquainted with the authorities he will find in the book much of the quaintness and vigour of the early writings. In the rich territory of Paraguay the Jesuits established semi-communal townships of Indians. They were built in the form of a square, with churches sometimes of stone adorned with altars and statuary brought from Italy or Spain.

The difficulty of persuading the Indians to work was ingeniously surmounted, and the kindness of the method used is remarkable when compared with modern ways of treating natives. Along the paths to the fields, shrines of saints were erected at intervals. At sunrise a procession was formed with a saint borne on high. To the sound of music it moved to the fields, pausing for prayers at each shrine and singing hymns on the march. As they proceeded the Indians gradually dropped off to work in the fields until only the priest and the acolyte were left. When one thinks of the early clatter of clogs and the music of the steam hooters in our Lancashire manufacturing towns, one must admit that the Jesuitical method has its points. Provisions were issued once a week, and a system of police and

militia for order and defence was instituted. The usual punishment was whipping, and the crimes most frequent were drunkenness, neglect of work and bigamy. The latter the Jesuits, as celibates, chastised with great severity. Two Jesuits lived in every mission, the elder governed and had charge of the civil power, the younger attended mostly to matters spiritual.

Mr. Graham believes that under this system the Indians were happy and content. But the jealousy of the Spanish settlers and their desire to enslave the Indians led to intrigues which ended in the final expulsion of the order. To illustrate this argument Mr. Graham asks us to consider what would be the position of a semi-communistic settlement of Kaffirs on the borders of Rhodesia when native labour was wanted. He has a playful way of alluding to Rhodesia as *Fraudesia*.

The book ends as it began with a note of melancholy. Mr. Graham is no historian judicial and calm who seeks truth and presents it to his reader without comment. He declares his opinions vehemently and then the futility of it all seems to strike him; and sadly, almost abruptly, he ends his history.

In his next book Mr. Graham is again in the lists. I have shown you a glimpse of his defence of the Jesuits and his accusations against the Spanish settlers in South America. But now we find him defending those same "conquistadores" against the self-righteous Protestant historians who to save their own withers attack the Spanish conquerors. Not that he spares the Spaniards. His indignation is hot against them for their treatment of the Indians; but he will not allow the Anglo-Saxon to wax indignant when the slaughter of the Matabele can be laid at his door; and he instances the Belgian methods in the

Congo as a proof that the 19th century is very much akin to the 16th.

"Hernando de Soto" was published in 1903. It is mainly concerned with the adventures of that intrepid young Spaniard in Florida, in the days before the United States had become, to use our author's words, "one huge advertisement for pills." The subject suits Mr. Graham. He has dug his information out of old Spanish chronicles and contemporary records; and his knowledge of the country aids him considerably in reconstructing the events. Hernando de Soto had the faults of the great Spanish conquerors, but in a lesser degree, and they were redeemed by many admirable qualities. Before his attempt to conquer Florida he had been in Peru. Though only young he remonstrated with Pizarro, against the execution of the Inca. Pizarro fearing his influence with the soldiers sent him upon an expedition and on his return he found the Inca dead.

La Florida, the land of flowers, is a name that appeals to literary men. Mr. Graham is sensitive to its charm, and he incidentally makes some scornful remarks on the ugliness of modern Yankee geographical names. "Flat Camp, Dogtown, New Small-pox, and Skunks Misery" are specimens he gives of the flights of fancy of which American nomenclature is capable. Ugly as these names are I must confess that great names such as Troy, Athens, Memphis and Cairo give me a worse shock when seen on the map of "God's own country." Whilst the pretentious absurdities of Pottsville and Smithville are distasteful to anyone with literary perception.

A brilliant Irishman was once asked the difference between the English and Americans. He replied: "There is none, except the language." Englishmen will find that difference disappearing if they allow Yankee Presidents to dictate the spelling.

Finding de Soto and his men wanted gold, the Indians of Florida lured them further and further from the coast, always pretending gold was inland. Struggling through swamps, fighting their way through forests (for the Indians were very different from the harmless Peruvians), the army at last reached the Mississippi. After three years' hardships they were in rags, and had lost a hundred horses and two hundred men. To crown their misfortunes Hernando de Soto fell ill of fever, and in a few days died, after having confessed and reconciled himself with God.

After his secret burial, finding the Indians had discovered the grave, his soldiers determined he should rest in the river's bed. They made a rude coffin, and says Mr. Graham, "at midnight silently they pushed out into the middle of the stream, and there, in grief and with some hurried prayers after commending Soto's soul to God, they launched their ark, which floated for a minute in the swift yellow flood, and then settling down deeper, vanished from their sight."

The further adventures of de Soto's army, their fights all the way down the Mississippi, and their final arrival in Mexico are related in the history of Gonçalo Silvestre which is contained in the same volume. Mr. Graham is more successful in "Hernando de Soto" than in a "Vanished Arcadia." His rugged, outspoken style, is fitted for the historian of campaigns, and his liking for Spaniards and Indians makes him fair to both sides.

I now come to his short stories and essays, which I consider to be the most important part of Mr. Graham's work as a literary artist. They are in four volumes, and the title of each is taken from one of the tales. The names are: "The Ipané," published in 1899; "Success," 1902; "Progress," 1905; and "His People," 1906. I have read that publishers' sales prove that the short story is not

popular in England; the public like plenty for their money. Most of these tales appeared first in magazines and reviews. They deal with a great variety of subjects—personal experiences in all quarters of the globe, sketches of queer characters he has met with in his travels, and short incidents in the lives of the poor in countries as diverse as Scotland and Mexico. The best of the tales are short, clear-cut, and compact in form. The salient points are brought out in a well-chosen and minutely-described setting. The ending is often dramatic, and when reading one feels in the grip of a master.

The little tale entitled "An Idealist," gives a short sketch of an old Cockney bill-sticker, an ardent Socialist, who began his speech: "As Shakespeare says, whilst the grass grows the 'orse is starving,"; and is interrupted by a voice at the back of the hall: "Why the 'ell don't he eat it then?" The old man often felt qualms of conscience about covering the hoarding with advertisements of stuff he knew was made with sweated work. "Some blood-sucker's soap," he would remark. The chief axiom of his faith was the wickedness of peers. He lived in an old slum in Drury Lane, and there he wrote pamphlets, which he printed himself on yellow packing paper. The old man has views on history and art.

"Talk of the Greeks and Romans," he used to say, "of course the Romans most was bourgwaw like ourselves, but the Greeks certainly 'ad opportunities. I mean in art and such like, and seeing people go about without their clothes, thus gettin' rid of all 'ypocrisy and that, but then as to an ideal for hewmanity, they was deficient." He looked forward to a time when all middle-class ideals should be swept away and mankind let alone to grow up beautiful, 'ealthy, artistic and as unmoral as the Greeks.

The same kindly comprehension and sympathy shown for the half-mad old Socialist is evident in the story of the



dying Scotsman, who is trying to hold on to life in order to see Moffatt once more. From Euston to Beattock it is a grim struggle in the 3rd class compartment between death and the sufferer, accompanied by a theological duel between the man's Cockney wife and his Scotch Calvinistic brother.

Equally successful, I imagine, are his studies of Eastern and Spanish types. "Faith," a tale of an Arab widow who journeys to Mecca to ask the prophet why her sex was barred from Paradise; and "On the Spur," which tells of a young Arab chief returning from Europe, to find himself supplanted in the favour of the Sultan, riding day and night, and arriving just in time to defeat his rival; these tales have a concentrated flavour of the East, which strikes the untravelled reader with the impress of its artistic truth. Mr. Graham has also an eye for men in the mass. Here is a description of a Monte Carlo crowd :

The Casino rooms were crowded—French, English, Russian and an occasional Japanese, looking just like a monkey who had escaped from freedom in the woods and put chains of trousers and of coats about his limbs, all jostled in the throng. Above them hung the concentrated scent of all the perspiration of their different races, mingled with every essence that the perfumer's art affords to mitigate the odours which humanity distils. All were well-dressed, and eighteen centuries of culture and of care had culminated in making everyone alike. Thus all spoke French, of course, with varying accents; but as they all read the same books, had the same thoughts, and wore the self-same clothes, the accident of accent did not separate them, and they formed one immense well-scented family as to exteriors, though with their hands all secretly raised against each other and their tongues wagging ceaselessly in calumny, just as a bulrush wags by the edge of some millrace half filled up with mud. All round the tables men and women stood, pushing and elbowing, and with their eyes fixed on the money on the cloth adoringly, as it had been the Holy Graal and they all vowed to search for and to grasp it at the peril of their souls.

For contemptuous and Zola-like realism that description would be hard to surpass.

Mr. Graham is constantly with the reader even when he is not writing in the first person. He is not one of those writers who hide behind their creations. He does not leave them to make their own impression, careless what it may be; they are so selected and projected as to emphasize his views and philosophy. They are not, however, puppets speaking his thoughts without regard to fitness. Their ideas are consistent with their characters, whether Arabs or Cockneys, Scotsmen or Gauchos they are the creations of one who has combined imagination with experience. They have in the words of Mr. Bernard Shaw "the true Cervantic touch of the man who has been there—so refreshingly different from the scenes imagined by bloody-minded clerks who escape from their servitude into literature to tell us how men and cities are conceived in the counting house and the volunteer corps."

In some of the short stories the passion of the writer blazes up, and he joins in the tragic emotion the incident awakes in the reader; in others he is grimly ironical as for instance the description of Queen Victoria's funeral with its reiterated phrase "She was the mother of her people," and the sudden intrusion of the man grown old during her long reign, stumbling and slipping about upon the muddy grass of the park, and eating ravenously the food in the discarded sandwich papers left by the countless millions, food which the dogs of the rich had rejected with disdain.

As a descriptive writer Mr. Graham loves to dwell minutely on every detail of his picture. If it be a landscape—sky, trees, earth, grass, animals and insects all are particularised; if it be an individual, dress, looks, deportment, tone of voice are set down; but you are never pre-

vented from seeing the wood for the trees; he gets his effect. No doubt the habits of observation learnt during his experiences in the deserts and on the pampas, where men note every little detail when on the trail, have given him his wonderful power of seeing and remembering.

When writing of nature or of inanimate things, he is all sympathy; whether it be the lonely tree standing like an altar on the vast South American plain, or the long, low Georgian room of his Scottish home, it is tenderly done. And the same with animals and insects. He will expatiate with pleasure on the points and disposition of a horse. He leads you on through a description of fashionable Belgravia to the contemplation of the body of a dead cat, and he devotes a whole tale to the fate of a poor moth born in a piece of needlework enclosed under glass which just fluttered and died "seeing the air it could not fly in, feeling the life within it, which fate that laughs at all things, moths and men alike, said it should never taste."

The short essays scattered among the tales embody his philosophy, though, as a rule, they are written with anything but philosophic calm and detachment. They belong to the literature of revolt. He holds that ideas cannot be made acceptable without a fight, and he accepts gladly a feeling of antagonism between himself and his readers; he flings his books to the public like a challenge.

By birth and education one of the aristocracy, he was caught (in Shakespeare's fine phrase) by "such a wind as scatters young men through the world." His insatiable curiosity about life led him to examine it closely in its most remote manifestations among primitive peoples, and where modern progress clashes with bygone civilisations. It is remarkable, not to say disquieting, that his verdict should be against our modern progress when by position he is able to enjoy its luxuries and comforts to the

full. He says there are innumerable cases of men of education taking to the wild, free life of the prairies after tasting it and cutting themselves entirely away from civilization, but never one of an Indian voluntarily taking to our life. He sets down what his keen, clear vision sees, unflinchingly, and with a freedom of language at times startling. He accepts frankly and insists on our acknowledging the animal in man's nature. I doubt his belief in the soul for he has written "what shall it profit a man if he lose the whole world and gain— an hypothesis?"

He finds a bitter comfort in his philosophy of failure. Success, he says, touches nothing that it does not vulgarise, and he has illustrated this opinion in the sketch of the skeleton of the defeated Spanish General seated in his chair on the deserted Cuban beach. The sun-dried bones are more interesting than the successful living conquerors. This scornful pessimism, which admits defeat but goes down fighting is very different from the vigorous optimism of Browning, who plucked proof of success from the very heart of failure, exclaiming:—

"For thence,—a paradox  
Which comforts while it mocks,—  
Shall life succeed in that it seems to fail:  
What I aspired to be,  
And was not, comforts me:  
A brute I might have been, but would not sink i' the scale."

Whilst pacing my room waiting for ideas for a suitable peroration my eye fell on the half-dozen or so books lying on the table which comprise Mr. Graham's literary output; and as I looked I half expected some of them to go off like bombs, so full are they of concentrated explosive matter. Next to them lay "Don Quixote" and the "Life of Cervantes," and I remembered that

Cervantes when a boy used to pick up scraps of paper in the street and read them, so great was his thirst for knowledge. "Surely," I said to myself, "Mr. Graham is like the author he loves, for has he not picked up scraps of humanity in all parts of the world, read them, and translated them for us in his books?" From Cervantes my mind travelled inevitably to Don Quixote; and then, as I thought again of Mr. Graham going forth to do battle with the giant of "Things as They Are," I felt that he was like the immortal Don, save that his clear eyes were denied the old knight's kindly veil of illusion.

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## THE WINDOW.

By S. BRADBURY.

MARK with what art he builded, he who made  
A window here, where these grey bastions frown!  
Its antique shape and grace, from sill to crown  
The chisell'd dream of one who loved his trade.  
Look on the landscape in this frame display'd!  
Dim heights and hanging woods; a little town  
Half-hidden in a hollow of the down;  
A verdurous maze of glebe and copse and glade;  
A homestead, set in orchards flush and white  
With foamy blossom to the brimming wall,  
Cresting a knoll, from whose cool, grassy base  
A carolling lark upsprings; in the clear space  
Of heaven his eager notes in showers fall  
As he mounts up, beyond our straining sight.



## THE HUMOUR OF WILLIAM BLACK.

By W. V. BURGESS.

THE purpose of this brief essay is neither biographical nor critical; its object is, rather, to remark a characteristic not usually associated with the writings of the author of "*A Princess of Thule*," namely, humour. Consequently, the barest outlines of his life and individuality must suffice, and these, simply, with the view of identifying the man with his work, or, strictly speaking, that particular phase of it under the present title.

William Black was born in Glasgow in the year 1841. He was destined by his parents for a landscape painter, towards which end he studied in the government school of his native city. His literary predilections, however, led him to abandon the realm of art in favour of the pursuit of letters. In 1864, having adopted journalism as his definite profession, he left the place of his birth and settled in London. Two years thereafter he joined the staff of the *Morning Star*, for which journal he acted as war correspondent during the Prusso-Austrian campaign. Amidst his newspaper engagements he found time to contribute numerous articles to the current magazines and to write "Goldsmith" for the "English Men of Letters" series. When the *Morning Star* became extinguished, Black was appointed assistant editor of the *Daily News*, a position he held for some years, indeed, until he relinquished newspaper work altogether and devoted himself exclusively to fiction.

During all this time, too, that is, from 1864 onwards, the reading world was receiving regularly, year by year, most charming stories from the pen of this busy writer. His first novel, "James Merle, an Autobiography," was published the same year as he arrived in London. It was received on all hands with a silence, ominous and complete. His succeeding works barely redeemed him from seeming oblivion, till, in 1871, "A Daughter of Heth" appeared, a book which at once established his reputation as a novelist of unmistakable excellence. A full score of delightfully written novels stand to the account of William Black, most of the number being, happily, too well known to require description here.

His permanent residence was sunny Brighton, near unto the tossing sea he so greatly delighted to watch, and which he so faithfully and frequently described. And here, widely known, and profoundly beloved by all his friends, after a brief illness he passed away, December 10th, 1898. Five days afterwards he was buried in Rottingdean Churchyard quite close to another of the nation's loved ones—Burne-Jones.

But these hasty recapitulations are merely the dry bones of the man's outer history. For the real palpitating self, one must turn to other details, those of his living personality, and for such, for the most part, I am indebted to one who knew him intimately.

One of Black's sayings was, that, "you want a hard brush to brush sunlight off a wall." This simile might be applied to his own temperament—he was happy in all his relationships, nothing in life ever soured him. True, his friends did not always understand him, but that was because his pleasantries were sometimes a little too recon-dite for them. His idle talk was often like the play of summer lightning over the fields of thought, and, if his

words were winged, his face was a never failing index to the harmless merriment of his mind—in it one saw nothing but gentleness. From him one heard nothing but generous criticism and merciful excuses for human faults. His laughter had no sting in it, his spirit breathed nought but toleration. He was forever hiding his own personality and pointing out the beauty of all else, good and true. To be in his company was like attending communion, where sweetness and charity were virtues imbibed rather than learnt, and where, under the veil of whimsical extravagancies, one forgot the conventional sides of goodness in the reality that lay behind it all.

Such was the man to whom we now turn for examples of those quips of humour, quaint in themselves, and redolent always of the spirit of their author. Of William Black, it must be said, that he never outgrew the characteristics of his nationality; what Scotsman ever does? Though his long and constant touch with cosmopolitan ideas saved him from obtrusive prejudice. He was proud of the excellencies of his race, and at the same time conscious of its foibles. Indeed, it is upon these latter that his raillery is mostly based. An inordinate esteem of the bawbees and a chronic thirst for whisky, a penchant for theological and metaphysical disputation and the conventional observance of the Sabbath, these in the main are the subjects of his good humoured badinage.

In "A Daughter of Heth" we find a homely thrust at the Scottish love of pelf. Mrs. Drumsynie, the wife of a carter in Dalry, had her husband brought home one day with a broken leg. Now, this woman so misconstrued the workings of Providence that when the injured man was carried in on a shutter she exclaimed: "I thank the Lord we will get something out of the sick society at last."

Suchlike stories may be found here and there in Black's



other works though they are not as plentifully strewn as those dealing with dram drinking. You will remember the old Highlander in "In Far Lochaber" whose contempt for water drinkers was thus expressed, "I neffer knew a man yet that wass sound in the body and sound in the mind too—a respectable, religious, good-tempered man—that wass afrait of a little wheesky." This opinion was shared by Neil, another veteran character, who gives it that the weather is so bad in the highlands, that if the Almighty was to take the sun away altogether it would be a week before it would be missed, "therefore," he concludes, "ye are flying in the face o' Providence if ye don't drink deep o' wheesky among the Scotch hills."

You will also call to mind the canting elder, in the same book, who remonstrated with Aunt Gilchrist for indulging in a nightcap of negus. "Such stuff," said he, "is the curse of the country." "Well," replied the old lady, "I'm no the country, and it never cursed me." And, she furthered her argument by saying, "Ye might as well condemn dancing because in the time of Herod the Teatray somebody's head was served up in a charger." Then, who can forget the aged pensioner, who, having gulped down, inadvertently, a glass of overproof spirits, so burnt his throat that his facial contortions were terrible to behold. A bystander hastened to him with a tumbler of cold water, which beverage the old man recognised in time to exclaim: "No, no, I'd rather suffer any torment than drink that!" Another incident occurring in "A Princess of Thule," tells of a certain exacting master who, fancying that his man was inebriated, said, "Donald, you're drunk." Says Donald, "It's a tam lee, I wish to Gott I was."

If Sandy has a failing for wheesky he is supposed to cherish a wholesome abhorrence of swearing. Let me recall that humorous episode in "A Daughter of Heth."

Where there are many sons in a family there is invariably the goody-goody youth who is a sneak and who informs of his brothers' misdemeanours. Such was Wattie the minister's favourite son. One day the long-suffering brothers conspired together, waylaid the informer, tipped him over the parapet of the village bridge, and held him there suspended by his heels with the top of his head touching the water.

"Noo, Wattie," said the eldest of the lads, "ye maun say a sweer afore ye get up."

Immaculate Wattie, however, would not jeopardise his soul by uttering bad language. He preferred punishment by water here and now, rather than risk hell-fire hereafter, and for awhile he was resolute. When, however, his head sank a few inches in the water, his courage failed him and he howled, "Deevil! let me up I hae said a sweer."

"Deevil's no bad enough ye maun say a worse sweer," and they doused him overhead in the stream. This time he came up with his mouth full of water and forthwith spluttered, "I'll say what ye like, Damn! is that bad enough?"

"Now remember the next time ye tell tales o' us," said the inquisitor in effect, "we'll just tell father, and bear witness, how that we heard ye down by the burn side sweerin' like a trooper."

In "Wild Eelin" one gets another case relating to the use of unholy words. "No, no, minister," said the delinquent, "ye needna warn me against the sin o' sweerin'; its a bad thing sweerin'; I dinna sweer, I wouldna sweer; but sometimes I've been damn'd near it."

The observance of the Sabbath is even more a matter of conscience with our friends north of the Tweed than the avoidance of swearing. You remember Alexander Cowan, one of the kirk's elders, who was so great a stickler

for "no manner of work on the Sabbath," that he was once shaving, close upon Saturday midnight, and had just completed one side of his face when the clock struck twelve. Thereupon he stopped, and to the merriment of the younger element, he appeared at meeting next morning with half of his face unshorn.

"Dod," said the freckled servant at the manse, "but our Meenister dings a'! He doesna gie the Lord a minute's peace o' the Sabbath. Its ask-asking, beg-begging frae mornin' till nicht." Then she likens him to her brother Jock who beats the stream continually, "and deil a trout does he ever bring hame."

The Highlanders have a horror of Sabbath-breaking cities, as the old minister in "Lady Silverdale's Sweetheart" puts it: Glasgae is an awfu place, tam'd bad indeed, its wild men hef no more care for the Sabbath-day ass if it wass Tuesday, aye, or even Monday."

Black, too, relates some amusing stories of the Highlanders' familiarity with the Almighty, and their leanings towards metaphysical arguments. In "In Far Lochaber" we read of Johnny, who, when ascending Ben Nevis observed, "I wass thinking all the way up, it wass a very stupid thing to make a hill as big as this. A very foolish thing. It is no use to anyone except to break your legs. But may be," he added as an afterthought, "some day it will fall on the top of Fort William, and, Cosh! there will be many a one get a sore head that day."

This same incorrigible Johnny observing a lonely cottage perched on the heights of Conaglen Forest remarked: "I'm thinking that was the last place God made, when he was going away home tired on the Saturday night."

In the same work there is the old Aunt who suffered excruciating pains and threw herself into furious tempers, thereafter excusing herself by quoting the scriptures. "If

King David was alive now," she said, "poor man he said some sensible things when he wasna groaning at his supplications—King David would say, 'Put not your trust in princes, no, nor in anybody that has got peripheral neur-algia.'"

Another story from "Madcap Violet" tells of two men in a boat who were unable to make port on account of the storm and darkness. "Tam you Duncan," says Donald, "if you don't make a prayer we shall be lost." Thus adjured Duncan knelt in the stern and began: "O Lord it is fifteen years since I have asked You for anything; but it will be fifteen years more before I ask You for anything again if You will take the boat into harbour." Just then the keel grated on the beach and Donald shouted: "Stop! Duncan do not pray any more, do not be beholden to anybody, because the boat is ashore already!"

Highland Peter, you will call to mind, was once reprimanded by an Englishman for repeating such apparently flippant tales. To whom Peter replied, "Indeed, and whoever is afraid of a story is a foolish man whether he is an Englishman or not an Englishman." To this the other rejoined, "In my country they do not understand joking about such things." Then Peter, "Kott pless me, do they understand anything at all in your country?"

It is the Highlander's faith in spiritual literalities that redeems these stories from the charge of irreverence and saves Black from any imputation of offence against good taste in sacred matters. One is enabled to smile at simplicities of belief without suffering any sort of shock to one's religious susceptibilities, because, nowhere is there a trace of the cynical jibe or the mocking spirit.

As a further example of this sort of theological quipping, it may perhaps be remembered, how John Macfarlane stumped the Geologist. "John," said the scientist, "you

believe in the Bible and that all the people who have lived in this world will rise again at the last day." "Yes, sir, I believe that," answered Macfarlane. "Now John, I'll tell you something. If the whole world was made of phosphates there would not be enough to make bones for all those people." After a momentary pause, John met the difficulty thus, "Well sir, the Bible tells us that those who are dead in the Lord will rise first, and there will be plenty of phosphates for them, and, as for the wicked, I don't care if they haven't a leg to stand upon."

John's acumen was on a par with Maxwell's courage. Maxwell was a believer in the doctrine of transmigration. Wild Eelin one time put it to him thus: "Now suppose, Maxwell, you were to go into a mow-cow what then?" "A wad fecht ma way oot," he answered sturdily.

There are some entertaining oddities to be found in "A Princess of Thule," mostly concerned with daft John, the piper. It was related of Allan that he had been to America "more than four times or twice," and that he once fell into the Crinan canal and on being pulled ashore he angrily exclaimed: "Kott if I was trooned here I would show my face in Stornoway no more!" This same Allan was so enamoured of New York that he blurted out: "If I had known in time I would have been born here." But, as Duncan remarks, these are some of the Piper's tales and, "he is such a teffle of a liar is that John."

John one time went on a steamer to pipe for a wedding party. The passage proved so rough that none of the party were capable of leaving the cabin when the boat was brought to. "Why don't your friends come ashore?" asked the captain of John. The piper made answer: "I hef been down below sir and four-thirds of the whole of them are all half-trooned, and sick, and dead."

It is further told of daft John that, happening on hard

times, he thought of going to work on a steam-boat, and so went to a tailor in Stornoway for a pair of seafaring trousers. "What sort o' troosers will ye want?" asked the tailor. "O," replied the piper, "I want a pair of troosers for a steamboat."

It will be observed that the humour displayed by Black is invariably in connection with his Gaelic characterization. Seldom does he venture upon English, and rarer still upon Irish, wit. Indeed, of the latter, I can, on the moment, only recall one example and that occurs in "Sabina Zem-bra." "Will ye have any pudding sor?" asks the waiting maid of the inn by the Shannon shore. "What sort is it, Nora?" enquires the diner. "The pudding is an apple poy, sir," answers the Hibernian maid.

Black's attempts at the humorous in respect of the English are not greatly successful. One story he tells of a short, stout, Brighton boatman who used to lounge on the railings all day, and, to whom a relative bequeathed a public-house in the Clapham Road. He was miserable in his new rôle, until he erected a wooden rail near the horse-trough—and, he hadn't lounged on that railing twenty minutes before all the old satisfaction came back to him. This notion seems about as far fetched as that of the old lady who declared that she couldn't go in proper style to have her photograph taken until she had put some eau-de-cologne on her handkerchief.

Perhaps among Black's English characters, Fred Foster in "Sabina Zem-bra," is one of the best he has drawn. That gentleman's philosophy of life is pitiable rather than funny, though it is not without a spice of humour. His ambitions were easy-going enough, he desired to have just sufficient poetry in his nature to make things look better than they are, but not enough to drive him into publishing it. "Fame," he asks, "what good is that? You don't generally get it till you are dead, and what advantage is that to a fellow whilst he's alive?"

He had an easy way of gliding over the discomforts of life, that is, theoretically. When his sensitive wife felt the cutting effects of her father's tongue, Foster remarked to her: "Bless you, it's wonderful how little words can hurt you, if you look at them the right way. They're only air—air can't hurt you. I've seen a woman's lips turn white because of a remark addressed to her. It would need some particular penetrating gaslight remarks to make my lips turn white."

Then there is Sir Peter who saw no fun in anything that contained a possibility of the disagreeable. Hence, when he was invited to join a yachting party, he cried: "No, no, no, —no yachting for me—not me, sleeping in a hole—washing out of a tea-cup—wet to the skin all day—no yachting for me, no yachting for me."

It is to be noted, too, that our aristocracy does not gain much lustre from the pen of William Black, that is, if it is to be judged by the character of Lord Mountmahon in "Wild Eelin." His lordship's ideas of life are, to say the least of it, somewhat peculiar, but this, of course, is part of Black's humour. "What's the use," Mountmahon asks, "of thinking when you can get it done for you by a penny newspaper?" Or what's the use of taking notice of people's opinions who have never known the world—never seen anything except their own back-garden and a hymn-book?"

Somewhere he tells us that a good wholesome weep is comforting to a woman, but a man hasn't time. There are things to be done. You've got to eat your dinner whatever happens. Marriage is an awful lottery, he says elsewhere, you can never tell whether a woman will turn out a sulker or a giddy prattler. As for religion, he gives it that Saints and Saintesses are all "bally rot." Human nature is human nature. Says he, "I dare say I could be a Saint myself if I laid on hypocrisy thick enough, but I could never become an early English persecutor." His notion of a good drawing-room story was that told by Teddy Hicks. It describes an unfortunate fellow propos-

ing to a girl, when his nose began to bleed, and he was in a blue funk, for he'd lost his handkerchief.

Black's jokes, with a literary reference, bear the impress of having been inspired by actual experiences. He says, "the order of the day is to have your book buffeted before it is published, and critically jumped upon afterwards." Again he says: "When you find your proofs to hand without a single blunder you may conclude the age of miracles is at hand." He relates of a man who wrote a book to which the publisher objected on the grounds of being "far fetched." "Don't you see its a joke?" said the author. "The public won't read a joke extending to five hundred pages," was the reply. "Bless me!" retorted the writer, "they read many a book of over five hundred pages without finding a joke at all." Lord Mountmahon's description of a journalist is that "he's too intelligent for a nob and too modest for a snob." The same authority exclaims on one occasion, "Look at the consequences of suppressing a poet—the awful consequences! He might burst."

Such then, are a few representative examples of the "saving grace" of William Black culled from his works generally—works, which, perhaps, are not specially distinguished either for plot or characterisation, but which are clean, refreshing, and replete with inimitable word-painting. Of the novelist's humour, too, it must be said, that it is neither profound nor coruscating, but it is humour free from coarseness and innuendo, and it fitly lightens the pages wherein it is found. It stands as an agreeable and completing foil to those passages of descriptive beauty with which Black's novels abound—passages which Ruskin says, are excelled by nothing of the like in our language. With their humour thus enshrined may Black's books long live to cheer the dull hours of human existence—gladdening life, as the light-tower, erected to his memory on Duart Point in the Sound of Mull, gladdens the darkling waves that surge about its base.



